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ABSTRACT

This seminar addressed various aspects of the provision of library and other services to external students. Resolutions carried at the end of the seminar are noted, and the full text is provided for the opening address, which summarizes the activities of the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission Standing Committee on External Studies, and the following seminar papers: (1) "Guidelines and Guidance--Galvanizing the Library Service" (C. Crocker); (2) "Library Support in the Open University" (K. Harry); (3) "The William Merrylees Library and External Students" (V. Muldins); (4) "SACAE (South Australian College of Advanced Education) Library Services to External Students" (J. Gray); (5) "Library Services to External Students in the Australian Regional Colleges" (J. Martin); (6) "Student Support in Lightly Populated Regions" (D. Meakin); (7) "Reference Services for External Students" (M. Maticka); (8) "The External Students' Perception of Formal Reader Education Programs" (C. Grimison); and (9) "The Winter-Cameron Report Two Years On" (M. Cameron). Biographical notes on the speakers and chairpersons and a listing of seminar participants are also included. Most of these papers describe services provided by Australian universities and colleges, but papers on programs at the Open Learning Institute in British Columbia and the British Open University are included. (KM)

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LIBRARY SERVICES

IN DISTANCE EDUCATION

Proceedings of a National Seminar
Held by the SA College of Advanced Education
Library and the University and College Libraries
Section (SA) of the Library Association of Australia
at Adelaide University Staff Club 22-23 August 1985

Editor: John Gray

Adelaide

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1986

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Foreword

The Library Services in Distance Education Seminar, held at Adelaide University Staff Club on 22-23 August 1985, attracted 55 participants. Most were librarians, but the presence of administrators and lecturers such as Professor Johnson from the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission, Dr Denys Meakin from the Open Learning Institute, British Columbia, and Anne Forster and Rosemary Luke from the Graduate Diploma in Distance Education at SACAE added another dimension to the discussions.

Two resolutions were carried at the end of the Seminar:

1. That the LAA sponsor a meeting of appropriate divisions to plan better coordination of support services to external students through institutional, public and other libraries.
2. That the LAA send a copy of the *Guidelines for library services to external students* to the chief executive officers of all postsecondary institutions in Australia with a request that they respond personally, indicating the extent to which they have been implemented by their institutions.

These resolutions were sent to LAA headquarters in Sydney.

Thanks are extended to the Library Association of Australia (SA Branch) and Ansett Airlines for financial and material support for the Seminar and to the members of SACAE Library staff and the UCLS (SA) Committee who assisted with the planning and running of the Seminar.

John Gray
Seminar Coordinator

Notes on the Speakers and Chairpersons

Professor Richard Johnson is a Special Commissioner of the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission. He is the author of *The provision of external studies in Australian higher education* and Chairman of the Commission's newly-established External Studies Standing Committee.

Christine Crocker has been Thatcher Librarian at the University of Queensland and edited the LAA *Guidelines for library services to external students*. In 1985 she was overseas on a James Cook Bicentenary Fund Scholarship and on her return took up the position of Reader Services Librarian at Deakin University.

Dr Keith Harry is Documentation Officer of the International Centre for Distance Learning at the United Nations University. He was formerly Liaison Librarian at the Open University.

Janet Martin is Deputy Librarian at Gippsland Institute of Advanced Education and in 1985 was working on an M Lib thesis at Monash University on library services to external students in Australian regional colleges.

Valita Muldins is External Studies Librarian at the Riverina-Murray Institute of Higher Education.

John Gray was External Studies Co-ordinator for the SACAE Library in 1985.

Dr Denys Meakin is Director of Student Services and Registrar of the Open Learning Institute, British Columbia.

Margaret Maticka and Craig Grimison are from the Dixson Library, University of New England, and they expanded on papers they presented at the 13th World Conference of the International Council for Distance Education held in Melbourne 13-20 August 1985.

Margaret Cameron is the Chief Librarian of Deakin University, co-author of the Winter-Cameron Report and Convenor of the LAA Distance Education Special Interest Group.

Sessions were chaired by Bruce King, Head of External Studies, SACAE, Anne Forster, Rosemary Luke and Ian Mitchell, Lecturers in Distance Education, SACAE, Graham Dudley, President, LAA Education for Librarianship Section and Patrick Condon, President, UCLS (SA).

Richard Johnson
Special Commissioner
Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission

OPENING ADDRESS

I am honoured to be invited to open this conference. Indeed I think it is the first conference I have ever been invited to open, and I intend not simply to open it and leave but to stay for the whole conference and to learn. In the area in which you are all expert I have a great deal to learn.

When I first thought what I would say in this address, I thought I would tell you how important distance education is, how it fits into the national educational structure and contributes to national goals, and within distance education how important libraries are. I thought I would tell you what a fine body of people you are, and call upon you to salute God, Motherhood and the Flag, to put your shoulders to the wheel and all pull together, and then, with malice toward none, with justice to all, declare the conference open.

However, apart from the fact that you have heard all those platitudes before, it would have been very impertinent of me. You people have been in this business for years, while I have been in it only a few months. I have come here to learn, not to preach at you. So I think it would be better to tell you what the Standing Committee on External Studies is doing and perhaps what it is not doing.

The Committee had its origins in a report in 1983 which pointed to the growth in enrolments in distance education and the expansion of provision. It pointed to a fair measure of coordination within each State, but a lack of national coordination and interstate cooperation. The consequence was a certain amount of duplication of effort and provision from one State to another, a number of gaps where some fields which should be provided somewhere in the nation were not seen as sufficiently large for any one state to provide. This led to some misallocation and waste of resources on the national scale. The report suggested a range of possible mechanisms to bring about coordination, and the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission resolved on this mechanism of a Standing Committee to advise it. That Committee was established early in 1985.

The members apart from myself are Professor Jevons, Vice-Chancellor of Deakin University; Dr Maureen Smith, Director of University Extension at the University of Western Australia and before that the Director of External Studies at WACAE; Vernon White, Director of External Studies and Continuing Education at Darling Downs Institute of Advanced Education; Ann Deveson, Director of the Australian Film and Television School; Jack Foks, Director of the Victorian Off-Campus Network of TAFE; Delia Craig, the Head of the College of External Studies of NSW TAFE; Dean Ashenden, Ministerial Consultant to Senator Susan Ryan; and Eric Willmot,

who is at present Deputy Secretary of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs, but is soon to take up appointment as Professor of Education at James Cook University of North Queensland.

The Committee has had two meetings so far, in April and in June, and has two scheduled in September and November this year. We would expect to have five meetings in a full year, roughly once every two months apart from the national closedown in December-January.

The main work of the Committee in the first two meetings has been to devise an agenda; I do not mean an agenda for the next meeting but an agenda for the next few years. Certain themes have emerged as matters on which our attention will be concentrated. Obvious amongst these is the whole matter of coordination, in the production and distribution of course materials, in cross-crediting of courses, and in any other ways that can improve the quality of materials and service to students and increase cost effectiveness. Another topic is the technology of communications and the ways in which it can best be used to support external studies. Clearly central to these considerations are the issues of quality in the education provided and services to the external students. We would like to see a nationwide network of learning centres available to assist students and we are considering ways to define and implement such a network. We are of course concerned about students' access to libraries and we are funding a study by Margaret Cameron to examine the feasibility of a universal borrowing card for external students. We will be looking at questions of costs and cost effectiveness, not with a view to making reductions for the sake of reductions but in order to free resources from one use to other more valuable uses in distance education.

In those are the main items on our long-term agenda, I should mention one item which is not. We are not considering the introduction of an Australian Open University. That needs to be said because so many people seem to think the opposite. That attitude is not in any way a criticism of the British Open University, which has been a remarkably successful institution and occupies an honoured place in international distance education. However we have a different cultural and historical background and what was quite appropriate in the British situation has less relevance for us. At the time of the establishment of the Open University, Britain had no history of external studies, little involvement in part-time university education, and no great tradition of access to university for mature age students. Australia has had all those for many decades and our task is rather to knit together what we have and to improve our performance than to establish another institution to compete with and damage those already in the field. There are at least two national models of provision of distance education in the world, the single national institution such as Britain's or Holland's Open University or the German Fernuniversitat and on the other hand the model of many providers working together as occurs in varying degrees in Canada, Sweden, India and Australia. We will keep to that

second model and improve it.

It should be realised that the Standing Committee on External Studies is not an executive body and does not allocate any significant funds. It is a committee advisory to the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission and it is the Commission's responsibility to allocate funds, paying what attention they choose to our advice. We hope to have some money, perhaps a little over $100,000, to support investigations and to initiate projects in distance education, but we cannot be seen as a substantial continuing support for an institution or an activity. Perhaps the biggest task we have in hand at present is to develop a general strategy paper, a sort of blueprint for distance education at the tertiary level in Australia. I would hope to have such a document available at least in draft in the first half of 1986 so that institutions and State authorities and indeed the Commonwealth's own Commission should have some idea of the direction of our thinking and some opportunity to respond.

None of these things can be done or at least not done well unless we maintain good liaison with the eduational institutions, with the coordinating authorities, and with the workers in the field, such as yourselves. In the development of distance education libraries have a central place. They supply crucial learning resources. They have particular problems beyond those of libraries in conventional institutions: special problems of costs in book purchase, in postage, in administration; special problems of administration involved in the whole business of despatch and retrieval; special problems of counselling bemused students who are not simply on the other side of a desk but maybe hundreds of kilometres away. Your work needs the professonal skills of a librarian but it also needs additional skills and special emphases. Without you and without that particularly skilled professionalishm the whole operation of distance education in Australia could not succeed. For these reasons I am very glad to be here to learn and to meet and to talk with you.

Without more ado let us get on with it. I declare this conference open.

Reader Services Librarian
Deakin University

GUIDELINES AND GUIDANCE: GALVANISING THE LIBRARY SERVICE

Introduction

My own background involves participation in five distance education courses.[1] In addition, I have been involved with institutional planning, course writing, and library support for distance students, as External Studies Librarian at the Townsville College of Advanced Education,[2] at the Thatcher Memorial Library of the University of Queensland[3] and now as Reader Services Librarian at Deakin University.

From 1980 to 1982 I convened the Special Interest Group on Distance Education for the Library Association of Australia, during that time organising the first national workshop on library services in distance education in Australia. I also convened the working party responsible for producing, on behalf of the Association, *Guidelines for library services to external students*. Those guidelines were a direct result of the efforts of participants at that national workshop, and resulted from an expressed need for such a publication.

This year I spent five months in Britain as the James Cook Bicentenary Scholar,[4] and the purpose of my scholarship tenure was:

1. To gain practical knowledge of the work and responsibilities of the Open University Liaison Librarians and their assistance in the preparation of teaching materials.

2. To research the development of library services to teaching staff and to students of off-campus university courses designed solely as adult or continuing education units, but with no accreditation towards a university degree.

Also today I would like to talk a little about the role of libraries in continuing education and educational guidance. I would like seminar participants to consider and discuss the role, if any, that the LAA can play in improving library services and access for this growing group of the population.

And I wonder if participants feel that guidelines are good, bad, or if most of us are merely indifferent to them. The publication of approved guidelines is obviously one area where professional associations have a responsibility: do we as librarians negate the influence of guidelines by dismissing them through 'lack of time' or really just through lack of interest?

So let us firstly review developments in library services to external, or off-campus, students.

Over the last five years, we have seen some such needed activity arising from a long overdue concern about library services to external students. In 1981 Ron Store published the results of his survey on library services to external students. In the same year the LAA's Special Interest Group on Distance Education hosted the first national workshop and followed that in 1982 by publishing *Guidelines for library services to external students*. In 1983 a Special Interest Group on Library Services was formed by ASPESA at its forum that July; and the Winter and Cameron study, *External students and their libraries*, was published and its conclusions widely disseminated. In that same year, Professor Johnson presented his report to CTEC: and with almost unbelieving joy we witnessed a little relaxation of earlier opposition to use by external students of some academic libraries. Now we are here, meeting just days after the ICDE conference in Melbourne, and hopefully we will return to our libraries with renewed enthusiasm for mutually agreed aims and objectives, and with a host of new ideas for our further consideration.

Guidelines: good, bad or are we just indifferent?

It is always too easy to blame lack of adequate finance for inequalities and lack of innovation in the library's service. Earlier this year, I surveyed libraries of those academic institutions offering external courses, seeking information on the recognition and use of the LAA *Guidelines*.

The survey went to 36 libraries; to date I have received 25 responses. In hindsight, I realise I should have sent the surveys to the chief librarians. I directed them to external studies librarians, yet we need to ensure that library administrators, at the top of the spectrum, are aware of the publication *and* of their library's response - or lack of response - to it.

Of the 25 responses, two felt their situations were not applicable for the purposes of the study. The University of Tasmania Librarian wrote:

> ...officially, this University has no 'external students' and therefore makes no systematic arrangements to provide external services.
> In practice there is a small number of off-campus students - officially referred to as 'distance education' students. Unlike external students these people attend lectures in their subjects at remote 'teaching centres'. Small collections of relevant texts... are lodged on extended loan in libraries convenient to the teaching centres. The number of students involved would not exceed 25 and most are enrolled for only one subject... the LAA *Guidelines* have little relevance to our odd situation.

When I was External Studies Librarian in Townsville in 1978, the CAE was then offering off-campus classes of this nature;

those students also received service from the College Library and though I have excluded the University of Tasmania from further analysis, I wondered if the students in this 'odd' category felt that standards for library service have little relevance to *their* situation.

One other respondent explained that the library was for teaching staff only; students were entitled to use another Sydney library by post or in person, but the survey was not referred to that library for response.

Table 1

Summary of Responses (23 respondents)

	Actual no. of Responses	Percentage Response*
Aware of *Guidelines*	21	91.3
Not aware of publication	2	8.7
Guidelines used in evaluation	6	26.7
Not used for evaluation	17	73.9
Intend to evaluate against *Guidelines*	8	47.1
Will not evaluate against *Guidelines*	5	29.4
Unclear if evaluation planned	4	23.5

* Percentages given are calculated on the number of responses relevant to each section.

So of the remaining 23 libraries, 21 were aware of the publication of the *Guidelines*, and two were not. However, only six of those 21 libraries had evaluated their services to external students by studying the *Guidelines*. Of those six, three introduced changes to their service and another desired change but was prevented through inadequate staffing and funding. These responses are summarised in Table 2.

Two other libraries felt change was not desired. One replied 'our existing policies adequately cater for students' needs', and the other commented 'services already of adequate standard'. However, it is worth noting that this library had *successfully* used relevent sections from the guidelines to support recommendations on library staffing to their college administration.

Of the 15 remaining libraries (see Table 3) not using the *Guidelines* for review of their current practices, only one responded that they found such publications of very little value in practical librarianship; they saw the guidelines as 'good for the ideal'. Perhaps the lengthy comment from the Librarian of the Riverina-Murray Institute of Higher Education is worth reporting here; she wrote:

> The guidelines would be of great value in the situation where new library services for external students were being established, or, where services were undergoing major expansion.

In the case of an established service, implementation of the guidelines or their use in evaluating the existing service may be a little more complicated.

Certain decisions for changes in External Studies may have to pass through a number of managerial levels within an entire institution, not only the library structure.

In other words, the guidelines provide a high standard for which library services to external students should aim. The basic problems of restricted funds and possible effects such as low staffing levels would, in some cases, prevent them from being of practical value. There is a need for such guidelines to be appreciated by funding authorities as a part of the overall strategy.

The working party, in the preparation of the *Guidelines*, was aware of the quite complicated routes for the introduction of change within an academic institution and tried to project that awareness in the section on implementation. In any revised edition, the LAA should consult CTEC, to see if the guidelines can be endorsed at that level; we received expressed interest from the Tertiary Education Commission, but we preferred to publish a 'first edition', and have it available, rather than wait for a possible endorsement. I feel it is better in the first instance to release professionally approved statements which can be tested, discussed and then amended in later revisions.

Eight libraries claimed lack of staff time for review, and of those, three also felt there was a lack of financial support for implementing any desired changes. One institution claiming these two factors as reasons for not evaluating their service, commented further that 'given the available resources, we believe we provide a good service for external students'. Another plans to evaluate current services this year; while one hopes to take a closer look at them, 'if time permits'.

Of those libraries *not* using the *Guidelines* for review, eight are keen to do so now. Five will not review their services in this manner; of these, one claimed that 'given the available resources, we believe we provide a good service for external students', and provided details to demonstrate this; another stated that the college was currently winding down its emphasis on external studies.

Especially disappointing were two comments. One library rationalised their lack of interest in the *Guidelines* by explaining there was little likelihood they could make any significant changes; they are experiencing serious budgetary problems, and the external operation is not a top priority. The position of External Studies Librarian was cancelled at the end of 1983, due to lack of funds.

Another library commented that:

> Not all of the guidelines as outlined in the publication are relevant to the services the external studies library provides.

Nevertheless we are working at all times to improve our services. During those times the *Guidelines* are consulted.

These responses indicate a lack of understanding about the use of professionally approved *Guidelines*. In the introduction to the *Guidelines*, the aims of the document are outlined:

> this document recommends the minimum level of provision for library services to students enrolled in the external mode... it has been prepared for the guidance of those responsible for the provision of those services. (p.7)

Table 2: Services Evaluated against *Guidelines* (6 responses)

Institution	Change Implemented	Comments
Macquarie University	Yes	- Greater use of telephone for contacting external students - Pilot project using courier service to deliver materials - Changes implemented from reading *Guidelines* and the Deakin University survey
Mitchell C.A.E.	Yes	- Helped in decision to install 008 phone service - In many respects, service achieves points raised
Queensland Institute of Technology	Yes	- Changes made to lending and copyright policies, and to housing practices - Question of improved central responsibility for external studies at the college also examined but without producing outcome - Collection integrated on open shelves, having been in closed access - Photocopies made in advance of courses were reduced and a policy of providing copies for retention introduced
Adelaide College of TAFE	Change not desired	- Services already of adequate standard - Sections of *Guidelines* used to support recommendations on library staffing levels to college administration - Recommendations accepted by college
Warrnambool I.A.E.	Change not desired	- Feel that existing policies adequately cater for students' needs
Victoria College - Toorak Campus	Change desired but not possible	- Mainly through lack of staff and funds - Would have liked to implement more mulitple copies of requested material and, - Supply photocopies for retention

TABLE 3 : GUIDELINES NOT USED FOR EVALUATION (17 RESPONSES)

INSTITUTION	REASON FOR NOT EVALUATING	COMMENTS	INTEND TO EVALUATE
SOUTH AUST. C.A.E.	Lack of staff time	Plan an evaluation later this year.	YES
DEAKIN UNIVERSITY	Lack of staff time	-	YES
GIPPSLAND I.A.E.	Lack of staff time. No financial support for changes.	-	NO RESPONSE
Anon.	Lack of staff time. No financial support for changes.	Given available resources, feel already offering a good service.	NO
Anon.	First enrolments in 1985	Consulted with other institutions. Adopted many of DDIAE procedures. Consulted Winter/Cameron report. Money a constraint.	YES
Anon.	Did not receive copy of Guidelines until May 1985	Within financial constraints, feel already acting upon spirit of Guidelines. Have had service evaluated over the years and had a positive response to own survey.	NO RESPONSE
Anon.	Lack of staff time	Not all of the guidelines as outlined are relevant to the services the External Studies Library provides. Working at all times to improve services and then consult Guidelines.	NO
UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND	Lack of staff time	Now being read and would expect their expression of desirable standards to be of considerable value.	YES
RIVERINA-MURRAY I.H.E.	Lack of staff time. No financial support for changes.	The guidelines would be of great value for establishing new library service. Basic problems of restricted funds, low staffing levels would, in some cases, prevent them from being of practical value.	NO RESPONSE
Anon.	Lack of interest at this time	In context of funding, no likelihood that we could make significant changes. Serious budget problems; external operation is not a top priority. No longer have an external studies librarian - position cancelled for lack of funds at end of 1983.	NO
UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG	Lack of staff time	Found guidelines interesting. If time permits will take closer look at them and may implement some changes.	YES (if time permits)
TASMANIAN C.A.E.	Of little practical value: good for the ideal	-	NO
Anon.	When Guidelines arrived in the library, shelved instead of given to professional officers	Guidelines held and now being read.	NO RESPONSE
NORTHERN RIVERS C.A.E.	Only small number of students and courses designed to be as independent of library as possible	As number of external courses increases, hope to be more systematic in planning for and evaluation of services.	YES
S.A.I.T.	Copy just received	Remains to be read and considered for implementation or not.	YES
Anon.	Did not know of publication	-	YES
Anon.	Did not know of publication	College is currently winding down emphasis on external studies.	NO

This is the followed by an explanation of the need for regular evaluation of the library's services:

> The library services offered to external students must be based on student needs which should be assessed regularly. The effectiveness of the library service should also be evaluated... This evaluation... should provide a basis for making adjustments to services so that they may be more cost effective and better able to meet student needs. (p.8)

And in the section outlining use of the document, libraries are exhorted to consider firstly if change is desirable within the institutional model, and then to ensure a common understanding of the priorities involved and the means by which they may best be achieved. (p.33)

So, until a library evaluates its service, by making its first priority the availability of staff time for the review, there can be no supported claims for increased financial resources, different library policies or changes in services or staffing levels.

LIBRARY INVOLVEMENT IN COURSE WRITING

At the Open University

In 1978 Sheila Dale, Chief Liaison Librarian at the Open University, gave a breakdown of the time the Liaison Librarians spent on various tasks, indicating then that 'some people were committing almost 75% of their time' to picture searching. For those of you not familiar with the term, picture searching involves 'locating and obtaining required items, the associated copyright clearance, progression of items through the OU system, liaison with appropriate personnel, e.g. author, designer, editor, and assistance with resource bids'.[5]

In her report, she concluded:

> the remaining service, which is taking an ever increasing amount of our time, is the preparation of guides to the use of libraries and literature related to the courses being produced. (p.321)

At that time, concern for library services available to OU students seemed almost an afterthought for the library, and with liaison librarians participating on course writing teams of each faculty, she still felt:

> We could play a more positive role in the compilation of recommended reading lists. (p.326)

From a 1982 internal paper, we learn again from Dale that 'the highest amount of guides to be written in any one year was 10..., the annual average was 4.3'. (p.2) During a 10 year

period, 47 guides had been produced by liaison librarians, with the time taken to produce a guide 'roughly 1 month'. (p.10)

That same paper provides a useful summary of the time allocated by the liaison team to all tasks. In 1982, when 46.2% of time overall was spent in picture searching, only 4.35% was spent in attending course meetings - and this in a wholly external and course-team oriented institution. 4.41% of time went in reading course materials; yet only 12.4% was devoted to preparing guides to libraries and literature.

Table 4: Summary of Liaison Time Use

	Percentage of time allocated	
Activity	1982	1976
Picture search	46.2	40.9
Guide to use of libraries & literature	12.4	13.8
Bibliographies/literature searches	10.05	11.6
Current awareness	7.4	8.3
General activities incl. professional devt.	5.3	8.1
Administration	5.0	1.9
Assisting individuals	4.5	9.5
Reading course materials	4.41	4.4
Attending course team/faculty meetings	4.35	5.4
Technology cuttings	1.1	1.1

In his annual report for 1983, Mr Simpson, the OU Librarian, gives figures for picture searches made by the liaison librarians. Of the 14,323 pictures sought over that 4 year period, only 69% were used. In a discussion with a former OU course editor, I learned that this practice of picture searching was regarded by some academics as a waste of professional library time, and a task that could be better handled by a central picture clearing agency. An agency, she argued, would be a quicker and more cost effective way of obtaining suitable photographs and the necessary clearance for their re-use in OU course materials.

From library staff, I also learned that there is some professional resentment of the large proportion of time spent with the purely clerical details pertaining to picture searching.

The Open University Library is emphatic in reminding us that the Library was set up and funded to serve the academic staff only.[6] While this may have been appropriate in 1969, all librarians today are aware of the changes wrought on their services by the passage of time - from bookmobiles to online literature searches, many changes have resulted from altered priorities of the library's clientele and consequent changes in library management and direction.

Now, with the considerable growth and development in Open University courses, the somewhat static role of the library has

been questioned within the OU itself, particularly with the University's increasing involvement in higher degree learning packages. While I was in Britain, I attended a meeting of the Open University Programme Board of Masters of Education, at the Dean's invitation, for discussion on library services to postgraduate students. The Board was particularly concerned that students enrolled in Masters programs need access to current journal literature and, in fact, this component was a requirement for the successful completion of the course.

In 1972 Simpson claimed:

> the pattern of services offered will change as experience shows how best the developing needs of the academic staff may be served. (p.388)

With some academic staff at the Open University now questioning the role of the library, and of the professional library staff, the next ten years may result in a very different type of library service within the Open University. Tertiary libraries are all maintained to serve the needs of the institution's academic staff; others also actively, not passively, respond to the needs of their students.

What can we achieve?

It is fair to say I was disappointed in my perception of the OU model of library liaison, nevertheless I am sure librarians can play an active role in course preparation through involvement, cooperation and working with the course writers. This requires some energy on our part; we need to convince our academic colleagues that we have a valuable part to play in the production of quality course materials. The attitudes we can expect to meet if we continue to maintain a low profile and library-based image within our institutions were summarised in the symposium, *Adult education and public libraries in the 1980s*:

> I suspect that for many people librarians are not seen as highly trained professionals, but as rather glorified counter clerks or stocktakers. Their professional skills are not readily appreciated, they are generally not consulted on a face-to-face basis by their clients. (p.55)

In comparison to that rather gloomy prognosis, Routh (1975) provides some hope, calling successful cooperation:

> A new triangle of relationships between student, teacher and librarian... for the present, the main implication for independent study for librarians is that a strict separation of library and teaching staff becomes untenable. (p56)

As I see it, the challenges ahead of us lie in:

(a) assuming a higher profile in the course development process,

(b) gaining basic understanding of adult students, their motivation and their methods of learning,

(c) exploring the teaching method adopted by individual courses, to discover how they will motivate students towards learning and the manipulation of library resources.

(d) bringing all these aspects together to result, for the student, in improved access to, but more importantly, *greater awareness of*, a variety of information sources and resources.

It all takes energy, enthusiasm, and, most of all, time. In 1982, Haworth recognised the time factor in her article on the expectations of teaching staff concerning library use by off-campus students, and she offers a tantalising challenge to academics to ignore our physical presence:

> To establish and maintain personal contact with course coordinators is time consuming for librarians who have a plethora of other responsibliities... I do not believe teaching staff expectations concerning library use by their external students can become well informed and thoroughly practical without continually maintained personal communication from librarians. Written communications from a library are so frequently filed in a waste paper bin. To do the same with a librarian is too daunting, even for the most ingenious lecturer. (p.160)

How should we gain entrance to the course preparation stage? You know best how your own institution works: recognise that overnight change is impossible, and decide to limit your initial endeavours to gaining cooperation from one or two of the more amenable (and library wise) lecturers. Work with course advisers, institutional designers. Cooperate and collaborate with your director. Once you have their support, encourage them to spread the word amongst their colleagues.

Once there, what can we do? We can advise on the strengths and weaknesses of the library collection; we can ensure recommended readings and support resources are purchased so their arrival in the library at the very least coincides with first intake of students; we can help in the production of annotated reading guides; we can advise on content, sense and suitability - and we can permeate the course materials with subtle reference to libraries, literature and resources. In other words we can help the lecturer help the students find their way around the literature of the subject they are studying.

But, it is up to us!

> Whether librarians, working as partners in collaborative educational ventures, will be able to meet the challenge the future presents, and develop an important and individual role in providing support services for adult learners, depends very much on librarians themselves. (Gains, p.25)

I hope we all return to our libraries with renewed enthusiasm for meeting the challenge.

LIBRARY SUPPORT FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION

In Britain

During my scholarship tenure in Britain, I visited those universities which receive funding from the Department of Education and Science (DES) as 'responsible bodies' for extramural education. Most of these institutions maintain a library of some description within the departments. The staffing levels in the libraries vary considerably. Not all institutions employ professionally qualified librarians; some employ a librarian only on a part time basis and most offer little in the way of support staff. At Leeds University, the control of the library is the responsiblilty of the staff tutor with a more than half time teaching load; at Surrey, one person is employed on a half time basis to operate the library as well as to administer the body responsible for funding the department. At Birmingham, with two librarians, three assistants and one part time clerical staff member, the library also assumes responsibility for the department's audio visual equipment and slide production facilities.

The accommodation for the libraries varies just as much. Birmingham has a purpose-built library; Oxford has just moved into a newly furbished and attractive area; London is housed in a wooden demountable building; Bristol, Manchester and Sheffield are remote from their departments' academic offices; and the libraries at Surrey and Leeds occupy multiple rooms on varying levels in an inconvenient and labour intensive arrangement.

The typical method of library supply, even to classes held on campus (and often in the department's own accommodation) is a quantity of books in a book box. Only two of the libraries I visited did not allow direct borrowing by students who are able to visit the library, but on the whole personal borrowing is still of little consequence. At the Oxford Department of External Studies, the number of personal loans is substantial owing to their extensive summer programs. In some of the libraries loan figures were not available due to the absence of formal statistical records.

Most libraries purchase books as requested by individual tutors, though sometimes book lists are checked by the appropriate staff tutor. The University of London has adopted a policy of purchasing within subject areas, using book selection committees; tutors must tailor their library recommendations to resources already held.

Several libraries used to produce accessions or holdings lists for their tutors' use but decreased funds have limited the production of these in more recent times. At the University of Nottingham, the library is now entering, by broad subject, all titles onto a microcomputer, and it provides an annual subject list to all tutors. Other extramural libraries are likely to follow this development, if funding is provided.

TABLE 5: Statistical summary of some British University Extra-mural Libraries (1983-84)

Place	Academic staff in Dept	Library Staff		Book stock excl scores records etc	Purchasing Allocation in £ strlg	Direct Loans	Annual book box loans	
		Prof'l	Support				Boxes	Books
Birmingham	22	2	3 F/T 1 P/T	100,000	13,683	735	562	15,718
Bristol	24	½	½ (temp)	40,000	5,000	No figure available	c. 200	c.6,000
Leeds	38	½	1 F/T 1 P/T 1 P/T temp	50,000	10,500*	No figure available	c. 120	No figure available
London	30	1	3	200,000	8,000	No direct lending	587	No figure available
Manchester	28	1	4/5	40,000	6,405	No figure available	146	2,622
Newcastle upon Tyne	9	½	-	17,800**	2,173	1,218	86	3,688
Nottingham	33	1	2 P/T	100,000	7,000	982	c. 320	10,793
Oxford	18	2	1	78,396	20,350	5,833***	173	8,184
Sheffield	n/a	½	1 P/T	c. 35,000	10,830*	513	c. 70	8,880
Surrey	10	1/4	-	9,000	1,200	No direct lending	170	c. 3,400

* In these institutions part or all of the extra-mural purchasing allocation is met by the central university library.

** A fire in 1979 destroyed most stock and this is gradually building up again.

*** Oxford has a large summer school programme when additional staff are employed to handle direct loans from the library.

I was particularly interested in the situations I found at the Universities of Kent and Warwick. The University of Kent assumed full responsibility for extramural provision in that County in 1975 and the University did not establish an extramural library. The responsibility for book box supply to extramural classes was accepted by the Kent County Library. However, in 1985 the County feels it has no option but to withdraw the library's support. The County holds 10,000 volumes in multiple copies in a special extramural collection and from this provides about 85 books boxes each year. Until now they have dedicated a part time professional librarian, with support staff, to this role, but with the recent departure of that librarian, the library was advised by the County office that her position would not be refilled. Funds are no longer available to purchase additional volumes for the extramural collection. In addition, the library is sensitive about its role in the eyes of its taxpayers; it accepts the tradition that a public library is designed to serve the individual who comes into the library and not a group, meeting away from the library. The County library would be happy to transfer the collection to the School of Continuing Education, or disperse it amongst its own libraries and allow extramural students access to all resources when they visit its libraries.

The School of Continuing Education has begun deliberations on its need for library support. In accordance with all the departments I visited, it too affirms the belief that reading is an essential part of any course offered by a university. At the time of my visit, the dilemma was unresolved but it would appear that the university library is unlikely to assist; while it provides some services to part time students enrolled in the school, it interprets its role as offering help to the fulltime, undergraduate on-campus student.

The University of Warwick took over full responsiblilty for extramural education in late 1984. An initial step in building up appropriate library resources was the allocation of £30,000 for expenditure in the university library. Currently the university library is following the traditional book box method in meeting the resource needs of its 'open studies' students, though this will come under review with the recent appointment of a new director to the department, and some changes in the structure of continuing education in that university. However, it is disappointing that the library *chose* to maintain the traditional extramural service. It had the opportunity to offer a more innovative and equalised service but has largely ignored the challenge presented to it, and preserved 'the cargo cult of the book box dropping in from the sky'. (Newman, p.41)

In Australia

Smith (1984) provides an extremely useful review of continuing education in Australian universities. He gives detailed descriptions of the types of courses, of the policies and priorities of the universities and of their administrative structures. He makes some reference to the libraries of the University of Melbourne and James Cook University of North

Queensland; both have assumed a strong 'public role'. (p.79) He did not specifically seek information about library support services to continuing education students, though, in a personal communication, he points out that it is plain that many university libraries do in fact extend reading and reference services to the wider public; some also have arrangements whereby 'outsiders' can secure borrowing rights at a nominal fee. In his report however, there is no reference to the need for library support to continuing education students.

The University of Queensland recently reviewed by internal and external mechanisms their commitment to and organisation of continuing education, and the School of External Studies and Continuing Education is 'currently setting up what is, by Australian university standards, a quite radical administrative machinery for the management and development of continuing education'. (Smith, p.69)

In its February 1985 continuing education brochure, the University advertised classes such as: Perception of women; Australian political systems; Study of religion in education; Writing and style; Books.

As an example of course content, 'Books' is described as:

> a close reading and discussion of four novels... Each session will open with a brief introduction to the work of the author and the place of the book in relation to his overall achievement. Some critical observations on the book itself will be offered... it will be necessary to have read the books before the seminars.

In its general information section, the brochure points out that 'some courses are of more general interest and suited to the person seeking the intellectual stimulation of a university level course'. Yet these students cannot borrow material from the University Library; unless they happen to be graduates of the University of Queensland itself, there seems little likelihood that they will receive any library support - and then only for a fee, additional to that paid for their enrolment in the course.

Should a University offer courses of this nature without allowing - more, even encouraging - students to read? The University of Queensland Library, like many others, already maintains multiple copy collections for undergraduate and external students; continuing education students would benefit from appropriate access to those resources. As an ex-Thatcher Librarian, I am aware of the constraints of staff time and adequate funds on additional library services, but as the University has decided that continuing education should be seen as an integral part of its teaching and research program (Charlesworth and Duke, p.14), library support must, by deduction, be as important to continuing education classes, or some of them, as it is in teaching and research activities.

I have somewhat consistently used the University of Queensland as an example, but only through my familiarity with its policies and not from any intention to condemn those policies.

I believe it to be representative in its library policies of the continuing education practices of most Australian universities.[8] I am certainly not advocating full-scale adoption of the British system of extramural libraries, but I would argue that library provision for these students may be necessary in some courses.

Continuing education at a distance

The Open University offers many continuing education or community programs to British residents. These courses follow the same style as their degree programs; materials are designed to be sufficient for the students' satisfactory completion of the course.[9] Other British universities are now considering 'packaged' continuing education courses as a possible attraction for the special funding of innovative projects, and there may be greater choice in these courses over the next decade.

In Australia, some institutions are already offering continuing education short courses by external study. They do so, to the best of my knowledge, without any support from the campus library.

Britain has one of the most sophisticated public library systems in the world (Dale and Carty, 1985, p.3); this same description cannot be applied in general to Australian public libraries, although some do meet extremely high standards. In addition:

> it can be said that no town in Britain is without a public library and few villages of any size are likely to be without the service of an issue point or a mobile library. This is a record which few other countries can equal. (Luckham, 1971, p.47)

Certainly it is a record that Australia cannot equal. Therefore, more appropriately, library support for continuing education classes should be of concern to the institutions offering those courses.

Support from Local Libraries

More recently Australia has followed the UK pattern with some progress in granting external students access to their local academic library. Some institutions allow external students to use the photocopying services and reference collections only; others generously grant full borrowing privileges; others grant some privileges but charge a fee of up to $30; some demand letters of introduction from the students's home institution; and, happily, several of the university and college libraries are reviewing their past restrictions on use of the libraries by external students. Today, perhaps even more than in the past, almost all libraries are under pressure from their existing readers (Horrocks, 1969, p.230) and library staff who have little time to spare, feel quite naturally that their first duty is towards the clientele of their own institution (Dale and Carty, p.5). But many libraries, without statistical

evidence to the contrary, overestimate the demands that will be placed upon them by external students of other institutions.[10]

In the context of continuing education, the role of public libraries is perhaps traditionally stronger. This tradition will no doubt continue, as:

> In the 1980s and 1990s, the public libraries can no longer afford to ignore the fact that continuing education is likely to become an endemic feature of what some have seen as the learning society.[11]

Educational Guidance

However, the role of public libraries extends beyond the provision of books or accommodation for external and extramural students. Some interesting research has been completed in the UK on the ability and appropriateness of public librarians in providing educational guidance to adult learners.[12] Potential students need accurate, up-to-date, objective and comprehensive advice about the many educational opportunities available to them.

> Public libraries lend themselves to publicising and information-giving... because they reach that section of the public from whom the motivated learner is most likely to be drawn.[13]

As one example, Sutton Library in London, regularly holds an educational advisory service in the library. Each July and August, there is a 'marketplace' atmosphere, where prospective students can discuss their aspirations with counsellors from a number of educational organisations. At Bradford, the library maintains a computer database of educational activities, for consultation by residents. And through PRESTEL, librarians can consult the national computerised service ECCTIS,[14] for help with enquiries on:

- what subjects are offered
- where they are offered
- the various levels attainable in each subject
- whether the courses are available for fulltime, parttime or external study.

In addition, in Britain there are several committees working to foster cooperative relationships between extramural departments and local libraries. The Library Association has a standing committee on libraries and continuing education; the East Midlands Joint Committee on Libraries and Adult Education has published (1978) an excellent illustrated booklet 'Reading lists for adult education classes: dos and don'ts for tutors (especially don'ts)', which could be adopted by other libraries; and there is an active group, Public Libraries and Adult Education Committee of the Northwest region, which regularly publishes the results of research into the library needs and support for adult education classes.

This group also published *Guidelines for cooperation*, to facilitate better understanding between extramural departments

and public libraries. In this document, they make the following valid points:

> The basic function of a public library is the preservation and dissemination of recorded knowledge and experience of mankind, but there are all sorts of other tasks that it *may* perform... Although it is not an *essential* function of a public library that it should be involved in cultural and educational work, the contribution it can make in this sphere is... an *appropriate* extension of function and immensely valuable both to society at large, and the library itself. (p.10)

In Australia too, we need to explore the involvement of public or other local libraries in educational guidance. Newman, commissioned in 1984 to review cooperation between public libraries and adult education providers in New South Wales, noted that often contact between the two services is unplanned, casual and rushed (p.26) but still recommended that libraries compile information on all available adult education in their area and act as referral points for enquiries about adult education courses (p.31, Rec.16). I would like the library's role to go a little further.

As Thatcher Librarian, I was also responsible for staff, collections and services in the University's six regional study centres throughout Queensland. In my 1983 Annual Report, I noted that there was a need for review of the positions and duties of the librarians in those local centres:

> While their major duty remains the efficient running of the library, a large proportion of their time is consumed by student queries. The librarians are often the only people in the centre at the advertised opening times. They are confronted with questions on specific subjects, courses, career planning, quotas, tertiary enrolments, etc., etc.

It was obvious they needed some guidance and training from the University in order to respond accurately and objectively to these queries.

Perhaps it is possible to offer, even by distance education, some training to librarians in regional centres and small towns, so that they are able to respond to questions concerning educational opportunities.

<u>The LAA - How can it help</u>?

The development of libraries, particularly public libraries, as educational guidance centres now needs to be fully explored by professional groups within the association. Perhaps the Special Interest Group on Distance Education, the Public Libraries Section, the Literacy Section and the University and College Libraries Section could form, between them, a working group or a standing committee to monitor developments in adult education, distance education and educational opportunities and guidance.

The LAA and distance education groups such as ASPESA, should initiate discussion, research and cooperation in this field; working parties could explore the training needs and equipment requirements and predict possible workloads, then widely disseminate their findings to allow frank criticism and to encourage eventual support.

The Special Interest Group on Distance Education must converse with the Public Libraries Section on the roles of institutional libraries and public libraries in meeting the information needs of off-campus students. No matter how good the service from the home institution, students by far prefer to consult library resources themselves and so inevitably turn to public libraries. The assistance of the public library in providing library backup to off-campus students has largely been ignored by the education sector, and by the public library sector, and perhaps we can rectify this.

Given that the Australian situation is geographically quite different to that in Britain, and that our public library development is, on the whole, less strong, we should also look at other libraries spreading in a network over the country in providing support for students, and guidance to potential students.

We should encourage the Association's Continuing Education Committee to seek professional expertise in the design of a training manual to equip librarians everywhere with a better ability to respond to adults seeking information on the range of educational opportunities available to them.

Conclusion

Inevitably, there will be changes in these forms of education over the next few years. While such developments need not reflect adversely on the library, they will bring some changes in patterns of use. We need to respond to these changing needs as they emerge; with flexibility in our services and in our attitudes, these new challenges can be met effectively and efficiently - and excitingly!

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1. Three have been completed: Latin from the Queensland Secondary Correspondence School; Registration examinations of the Library Association of Australia; Graduate Diploma in Library and Information Science, from the Riverina College of Advanced Education. I am still continuing with one course, having transferred to that institution from another, carrying some credits for semesters already completed.

2. My appointment as External Studies Librarian was from October 1977 to December 1978. The College was later amalgamated with James Cook University of North Queensland.

3. Thatcher Library, with a staff of ten and a bookstock of c.120,000 items, offers a postal service to the University's external students. It is a branch library of the University library system and is also open for direct use by off-campus and on-campus students.

4. This scholarship is offered on a biennial basis, to a librarian from Australia or New Zealand, and is awarded on the basis of the applicant's proposal and its relevance to librarianship in Australia/New Zealand. The scholarship is funded by Blackwell's of Oxford.

5. Dale (1982) p.2.

6. For example, see: Dale (1981) p.16 and (1978) p.319; Simpson (1970) p.63: '...the chief function is to serve academic staff at Headquarters'.

7. His definition is also useful: 'this includes all activities of an educational or cultural-development nature conducted by the University for the wider public or specific groups within it and not formally accredited by the University'. (p.2)

8. In a personal communication, Smith says that at the University of Newcastle 'continuing education students who are undertaking 'substantial' courses... are given the same library rights as undergraduates... but I think that is rather unusual'.

9. Tight (1983) p.187: OU community education program materials are designed so that learners of relatively average ability can use them to achieve learning objectives without support.

10. The University of Queensland, for example, in 1983 allowed undergraduate borrowing privileges for such students on a trial basis; in fact, the computer-recorded loan statistics showed that this borrowing was a very small proportion of overall library loans, and the staff felt quite able to cope in extending the facilities. In 1984, 82 students borrowed 1,631 items, which represented 0.18% of the library's total loans.

11. *Adult education and public libraries in the 1980s: a symposium*, p.67.

12. Further information on these developments is given by Tilley and by Butler.

13. Percy and Willett, 1981, p.46.

14. ECCTIS, the Educational Counselling and Credit Transfer Information Service, is being developed in Britain through funding from the Department of Education and Science, under a three year contract with the Open University. It has been set up as a national computerised service to provide information about courses in further and higher education. Enquiries may be directed to ECCTIS by letter or telephone, or through PRESTEL. This year they hope also to have microfiche packs available on annual subscription, with a comprehensive index providing quick access to the appropriate course details.

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Keith Harry
Documentation Officer
International Centre for Distance Learning

LIBRARY SUPPORT IN THE OPEN UNIVERSITY

I would like initially to paint a brief picture of the work of the Open University, and to follow this with a description of the functions and services of the Open University Library. I will then give a brief account of research which has been undertaken on OU students' library needs and which has influenced the development of *regional* library support for students. I will finish by mentioning one or two current and planned initiatives and by describing very briefly my own work with the International Centre for Distance Learning.

The Open University was granted a Royal Charter in 1969 and began teaching in 1971. It was established principally to provide a second chance for adults in the UK who did not have the opportunity of receiving higher education immediately on leaving school. The total student enrolment for 1985 in the University's 3 programs, undergraduate, postgraduate and continuing education, is around 100,000.

Between 20,000 and 25,000 students are admitted each year to the undergraduate program, which currently comprises over 130 courses at four levels and drawn from approximately 30 disciplines. First and second level courses are broadly based, often multidsciplinary, whereas third and fourth level courses are more specialised. Degrees are obtained by accumulating credits, 6 for a BA, 8 for a BA (Honours). 60,000 students are currently enrolled on the undergraduate program; over 65,000 have graduated since 1972, with 10,000 going on to obtain honours degrees.

The University's higher degrees of BPhil, MPhil and PhD are awarded on completion of a program of research or advanced study and submission of a dissertation or thesis. The University is also introducing a program of taught Masters degrees. Approximately 600 postgraduate students are currently enrolled.

The OU undergraduate program has almost reached the position where its course profile is complete. The major growth area in the University is now the continuing education program, whose courses attracted 40,000 students in 1984. This program embraces several distinct areas, notably the Open Business School, in-service teacher training and community education. The OU is also producing many professional updating courses in cooperation with other institutions including the Science and Engineering Research Council. Associate programs are also available; these enable students to take single courses if they do not wish to embark on a full degree program.

The printed course unit is the principal teaching medium in most Open University courses. A number of fourth level courses

require students to undertake a project or are based principally on set books supported by direct contact with academic staff. Students on courses at all levels also receive supplementary printed materials which include broadcast notes to accompany the radio and television programs produced at the BBC/Open University Production Centre which form a component of most courses. Another form of printed material is the reader, a specially compiled collection of papers, articles and extracts which individually may be difficult for students to obtain. Kits are designed and supplied for some courses, and an additional requirement on foundation courses and some higher level courses is attendance at summer school. The University also operates an extensive student support system which I will describe a little later. The effectiveness of the teaching media and methods employed is assessed continuously, as is the potential for exploitation as part of the OU system of various forms of new technology.

Undergraduate courses are written by course teams, whose size and methods of working vary considerably, but which consist primarily of academic staff members, with a BBC/OUPC producer, an educational technologist, a staff tutor from a regional office, an editor, and others as and when required, including in many instances a librarian. Course team authors' responsibilities include selection of set books, writing of course units, planning and presentation of broadcasts in conjunction with the BBC/OUPC producer, designing tests, and writing and marking examination papers.

The Open University has divided the UK into 13 regions to provide a tutorial and counselling service to its students. Personal contact with students is maintained by more than 5,000 part time tutor-counsellors, course tutors, and associate students counsellors. Over 260 study centres have been established to provide meeting places and facilities of various kinds, including access to computer terminals and to libraries of course-related texts.

Coordination and supervision of tuition is the responsibility of full time staff tutors, who are members of faculties but are also responsible to regional directors. Full-time senior counsellors supervise counselling. The work of the regions is in turn coordinated by the Director of Studies, Regional Academic Services, at Walton Hall.

Regional offices are located in each of the 13 regions; some of the larger regions also have sub-offices. Regional staff appoint and supervise part-time tutor-counsellors and course tutors, organise the use of study centres, and allocate students to centres and to tutorial and counselling staff.

In common with other UK universities, the Open University is financed principally from public funds. Around 80% of funding comes from the Department of Education and Science; the remainder is found from student fees, sales of course materials, and other sources. The program of the Centre for Continuing Education is required to be self-financing; 60-70% of its costs are covered by income from student fees, and the

balance by special grants from various agencies. The OU's budget is currently approaching £60m per year. I will return to the subject of finance a little later.

The Open University Library is located on the University's main Milton Keynes Walton Hall campus. Unlike the libraries of many other distance teaching institutions, the OU Library does *not* operate a book lending service to students. Students depend for their extra reading requirements on the public library service and on the resources of local college, polytechnic and university libraries when these are within reach and if they are prepared to grant access.

The users of the Library are academic staff based at the Walton Hall campus and in the University's regional offices, together with administrative staff and a number of full-time postgraduate students. Other students are entitled, in common with all members of the general public, to use the Library for reference purposes on application, but since the Library is only open during office hours from Monday to Friday, few students find it possible to take advantage of its facilities.

There was never any possibility that the OU Library would send books to students. The 1969 Planning Committee report makes it clear that students must depend for their background reading on the national library service. Although the research function of academic staff members was always intended to be as important in the OU as in conventional UK universities, the close proximity of large national and academic libraries in London, Oxford and Cambridge precluded the necessity of providing extensive research library resources. It was also foreseen in the planning stages that the work of the Library would reflect the University's involvement in producing audiovisual course components as well as printed materials. The Librarian's title in the OU is Librarian and Director of Media Resources.

The Library serves a genuinely innovative teaching institution, but, as will I hope become clear from my brief description, it is itself an amalgam of innovative and strictly traditional elements. Immediately below the Librarian in the administrative hierarchy are 3 sub-librarians, responsible respectively for technical services, the Media Library and a team of Liaison Librarians. I will follow this division in my account of the Library.

The cataloguers in the Technical Services Division have for the last few months been able to key cataloguing data via a terminal into one of the University's mainframe computers. The resultant microfiche catalogue will eventually, when a large volume of retrospective work is completed, supersede the name catalogue which is at present on cards. A long-term aim is to make the whole catalogue accessible online to library users. The acquisitions area operates a manual system and the issue system is also manual. The book collection and the journals collection both reflect the University's teaching areas so that there is very little material on medical science, law or modern languages, none of which are taught at the OU.

The second area in my description, the Media Library, maintains a card catalogue of nonbook materials. This too will

eventually be superseded by a computer-generated microfiche catalogue. A large proportion of the Media Library's stock consists of a complete collection of copies on audio and video cassette of the University's radio and television programs, current and pre-current. The Media Library also maintains collections of films, photographs and illustrations, slides, scripts, gramophone records and source catalogues. In terms of numbers of items held, audiovisual items approximately equal printed items, there being around 110,000 of each.

The work of the Liaison Librarians in the third area of the Library is probably of greatest interest to this Seminar. A team of Liaison Librarians, headed by a Chief Liaison Librarian, provides reference and information services to each of the faculties of the University plus the Institute of Educational Technology. In addition to undertaking such conventional tasks as answering reference and bibliographical enquiries, conducting literature searches and providing a regular current awareness service, Liaison Librarians also have two responsibilities unique to the OU Library amongst university libraries in the UK. The first is picture searching, searching for and obtaining copies of photographs and other illustrations for possible use in printed course materials. The second is attending course team meetings with a view to writing, at the request of the course team, literature guides to be sent to students as part of their course materials. In general, literature guides follow a standard format. They usually contain sections which aim on a general level to help students make the best possible use of the library services in their locality and to conduct a literature search. Additional sections comprise a survey of the principal bibliographical tools and reference works in the subject area of the course, and a list of potentially helpful institutions and organisations. Over 60 such guides have been produced to date, the majority for Education, Arts and Social Sciences courses. Literature guides represent the major contribution of the OU Library to the provision of direct support to students.

Before the University began teaching in 1971, fears were expressed in the professional library press that heavy demands would be placed on public libraries by OU students. These fears proved groundless since the printed course materials sent to all students, in combination with the set books which students were expected to buy, provided all the reading material that all but the most voracious student could cope with. Once students progressed to higher level courses, however, their needs changed, and a number of research studies have been undertaken in this area.

Two studies involved the University of Sheffield Postgraduate School of Librarianship and Information Science. The main conclusion of the first, published in 1973, was that OU students taking foundation and second level courses made little use of libraries, as had been predicted by the University. But students relying on small service points who were on 3rd and 4th level courses requiring access to more advanced and specialised materials, would find themselves at a disadvantage. A 1976 study concentrated on the needs of

students on higher level courses. It confirmed the greater use of libraries by students on higher level courses which required access to specialised sources of information or which contained a project component. The most frequently mentioned suggestion for action by the OU was the provision of 'regional information about libraries, record offices and other information resources, showing opening hours, special collections, services available, general rules about access'. A further request was for blanket permission to be obtained for OU students to use university, polytechnic and other academic libraries.

Following the publication of these findings, a Working Group on Student Library Services was established. The Working Group (now disbanded) comprised each of the regional staff members who had previously been designated as Library Liaison person. Its principal recommendations, drawing on the findings of the 1976 study and on the knowledge of its members, were that regions should bring together and make available to students detailed information on local library services, and should liaise with local libraries. The results of the Working Group's endeavours have been the development of a selection of annually updated regional guides to local library services which in many cases include information on archives and other special collections. The recommendation for liaison at local level has also borne fruit; a variety of activities, including visits to libraries and other sources of information, and seminars for users, take place throughout the UK. The Working Group was also concerned with problems facing OU postgraduate students, in particular, external part-time students.

A report on postgraduate students was undertaken in 1979 which concentrated on problems relating to libraries, tuition, and costs of research. The findings concerning libraries seem to indicate that problems were no longer related to shortage of information or facilities available in particular localities. They were rather concerned with making the most effective use of facilities which are not always open at convenient times and which are not able to provide required materials from their own stocks. Access to academic libraries and the obtaining of borrowing rights were also, and continue to be, a problem in some cases since higher education institutions are autonomous and must serve their own students' interests first. Finally, successive OU publications designed to help new students overcome problems in studying and making use of local resources have included specific advice on the use of libraries. The most recent such publication, the *First year student handbook*, stresses the importance of acquiring library skills and strongly advises new students to introduce themselves to their local libraries at an early stage. It suggests that any problems arising during the student's course of study which cannot be resolved by the librarian should be brought to the attention of the student's tutor-counsellor or counsellor so that the Regional Office can take them up with local libraries.

At this point I will cast gloom over the prodeedings by quoting some figures from the most recent Librarian's Annual Report. The figures illustrate the effects on the Library of the economic crisis in which the OU at present finds itself. Staff

who leave are in general not being replaced. Of the 39 posts on the Library establishment, 10 were frozen by the end of 1984. Total Library expenditure in 1984 amounted to £681,000, £60,000 less than in 1982. The sum spent on books in 1984 was £65,000, which is £10,000 less than in 1982. This is probably the most dramatic enforced spending cutback, but all areas are affected to some degree. For example, periodical subscriptions are being reduced in number, binding of journals is much less common than in previous years and the number of interlibrary loans obtained has risen sharply as book purchasing has been curtailed.

In spite of the unpromising financial situation, however, new developments are taking place. For example, the Arts Faculty is planning to create a computerised simulation of a section of the British Library BLAISE system for the use of students in its MA courses. The idea is to create a simulation which is accessible on one of the University's mainframe computers, via study centre terminals. The use of the simulation will prepare students to undertake real searches without accumulating excessive costs by searching an actual database. One of the Arts Liaison Librarians is involved in this project.

A recent development of a quite different kind was the recent opening of a purpose-built study centre based in a public library in Chesterfield, which is in the East Midlands Region. This is only the second study centre to be based in a public library. It is particularly unusual not because it possesses additional facilities within the study centre itself, but because it makes immediately available to students the facilities of the library. Students also benefit since the study centre is accessible throughout the opening hours of the library, not just in the evening or whenever the host institution cares to *make* it accessible.

My third example is not a new development neither does it involve OU Library staff, but it represents a long-term and continuing involvement of OU regional staff in a library-related project. This is the Education Advisory Services Project, based on the Yorkshire Region of the OU. The project, which began in 1980, and has published several reports and directories, has been funded by the British Library with the aim of investigating the suitability of public libraries compared with other agencies, as information points for educational enquiries from adults.

Finally, a very brief word about my own work in the International Centre for Distance Learning. The United Nations University funds the Centre since it regards distance education as a potentially valuable tool in its own work. The functions of the Centre are to collect documentation and information and to disseminate information on distance education throughout the world. This work has been undertaken since 1978 and the Centre is currently operating under its fourth title and its fourth source of funding since that time. My ICDE paper described the Centre and its activities. I will be happy to send a copy to anyone who is interested.

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Valita Muldins
External Studies Librarian
Riverina-Murray Institute of Higher Education

THE WILLIAM MERRYLEES LIBRARY AND EXTERNAL STUDENTS

I would like to commence with a short introduction to the Riverina-Murray Institute of Higher Education (RMIHE), and then proceed with an overview of the library service provided by the Institute to its external students.

Location

The Institute is situated at Wagga Wagga, a city of approximately 50,000 people, in the Riverina region of New South Wales.

Background

RMIHE began as the Riverina College of Advanced Education in 1972. This was the result of the amalgamation of Wagga Wagga Agricultural College and Wagga Wagga Teachers' College. Riverina College underwent a name change in 1985 to become Riverina-Murray Institute of Higher Education, in order to include the steadily growing Murray Campus located at Albury. Courses taught in the external mode of study have been offered since Riverina CAE's inception in 1972.

Students

The 1984 Annual Report of the New South Wales Higher Education Board showed that Riverina-Murray Institute had the largest college enrolment of external students in New South Wales for that year, followed by Mitchell CAE in Bathurst.

External student numbers have steadily increased from an enrolment of 42 in 1972 to over 4,000 individual external student enrolments in 1985. This growth in numbers was rapid, and, to a certain extent, unexpected.

RMIHE students are located throughout Australia. The majority are in metropolitan areas. particularly Sydney and Melbourne, but others are in quite isolated areas. For example, one student who has contacted the Library a number of times, lives in Fregon, almost on the border between South Australia and the Northern Territory. There are only two deliveries of mail per week, via Alice Springs, so a radio telephone has been his usual form of contact. This example highlights the added problems some external students face. It is interesting to note that not only are many of the Institute's students isolated, RMIHE itself is quite isolated from other major cities.

There are a number of overseas students enrolled, some of whom live in Fiji, Hong Kong, and Papua New Guinea.

William Merrylees Library

Throughout tertiary education the external mode of study has generally been regarded as an adjunct to the more usual, or orthodox, full-time/internal study mode.

This 'second class status' attitude has applied within Riverina-Murray Institute. It has been evident, until relatively recently, in the lack of growth in the area of library services to external students. Fortunately, this situation is changing.

The Institute's William Merrylees Library exists to service its staff and all its students. A number of changes are now evident to improve the services specific to external students.

Firstly, and perhaps most importantly, a professional librarian has full-time responsibility within the library for external students. Also, other reader services staff are becoming more involved in the provision of information and reference services to external students.

In theory, the Library has always been aware that it must provide for the information needs of all students, regardless of the mode of study they have chosen. Unfortunately, external students are less visible than internal students, and usually less vocal. So, changes for their benefit can be slower to occur. With a Librarian solely responsible for their needs, it is hoped that information provision to external students, and their access to the library, will increase, establishing external student services as more than just an addendum to the library services offered to staff and internal students.

Staff directly responsible for external student library services are: a full-time librarian, and a part-time assistant. Also, assistance as required is available from other reader services staff.

Services

Varied services are offered to external students, and these include the following:

- The loan of books and audiovisual materials, including audio and video tapes, filmstrips and slides.
- Microcomputer software loans, compatible with Apple computers.
- A photocopying service for journal and book extracts, within copyright restrictions.
- Traditional reference and information services. These services range from short answers to questions on the telephone, to full literature searches.

- Computer information searches can be carried out on behalf of external students, with access to DIALOG, MEDLINE and AUSINET systems. There is a charge for computer searching.

- Microfiche catalogues of the Library's holdings are available for loan (not annotated).

- Serials holdings lists are available. Lists of serials in specific subject areas are prepared, e.g. Reading and education, Librarianship, Business and accounting, etc. Computer printouts of the Library's entire holdings are also available.

- Printed library guides are produced. 'Pathfinders' are designed to help students find information in different subject areas, and there are also guides to assist with use of specific reference tools.

- A library guide for external students is updated annually. This provides general information for external students, to assist them in utilising their library service. This guide is included in the first mailing to all external students each year.

- RMIHE is a member of the CLANN Libraries Reciprocal Borrowing Scheme in New South Wales. Letters of introduction are provided to external students wishing to enrol for reciprocal use of institutions other than CLANN libraries, which require such letters.

As we all know, external students experience feelings of isolation at one time or another. In an attempt to at least partly allay some of these feelings, the William Merrylees Library attempts to offer an amicable service, with quite informal interaction with the students.

To this end:

- Written communication is frequent and informal.

- Telephone contact is encouraged.

- A 'Vocaphone' answering machine has been installed specifically for external students, to allow these students to both utilise cheaper STD rates after hours, and also to facilitate more immediate access to their contact person within the Institute Library.

- Contact with external students at residential schools is actively pursued, both in class situations and socially. Guided library tours and reader education are also provided. Informal contact is encouraged.

- The annual library guide for external students 1986, will contain photographs of both staff members directly responsible for external students.

- A video presentation of the Library, prepared for external students, is to be produced late in 1985. This will be available for loan in both VHS and Beta formats.

General

Other points perhaps specific to Riverina-Murray Institute are:

- The Institute Library does have a policy of differential service to different students. For example, a mail service is not available to external students living within 50km of Wagga. This was originally based on funding considerations, and the belief that local users would benefit from having personal contact with the Library and its staff.

- Isolated and remote students are given some priority when they appear to be at a disadvantage. The Library is aware that relatively easy access to suitable libraries, such as may be the case with some students living in metropolitan areas, does not automatically assume that required materials are available.

- RMIHE has the distinction of having large numbers of external Library and Information Science students enrolled. Despite the fact that these students are expected to carry out much of their own reference work in certain subjects, they do generate a large proportion of the requests received by the Library. This matter could raise some interesting questions.

Also, 1985 was the final intake of first year internal Library and Information students. Due to a steady decline in numbers of full-time Library Science students, the course will only be offered in the external mode in the future. It should be of interest to watch any changes in usage statistics due to this change.

Conclusion

This general outline was intended to give a basic overview of the William Merrylees Library's approach to the external students of Riverina-Murray Institute of Higher Education.

Staff at the Library are aware of the diverse needs of external students, and that there are shortcomings in the services provided.

It is hoped that with regular and continual evaluation, and with an External Studies Librarian representing the needs of external students, this service will grow and improve.

John Gray
Coordinator: Library Services to External Students
South Austalian College of Advanced Education

SACAE LIBRARY SERVICES TO EXTERNAL STUDENTS

The South Australian College of Advanced Education was established in 1982 by the amalgamation of four colleges, two of which were the result of previous amalgamations. Having been involved in two of these, I am prompted to offer you two quotations. First, Mme Du Deffand on Distance:

> The distance is nothing; it is only the first step that is difficult.

She was commenting in 1763 on the legend that St Denis walked two leagues carrying his head in his hands. Second, my desk calendar on Education:

> Education is the process of passing from cocksure ignorance to thoughtful uncertainty.

The College traces its history to 1861 when the South Australian School of Art was formed, to Adelaide Teachers College (1876) and the Kindergarten Training College (1907). In the 1960s four additional teachers colleges were established. In 1962, Adelaide, Wattle Park and Western Teachers Colleges established a Department of External Studies. This was located at Adelaide Teachers College and carried out the administrative functions of enrolling students, sending out course materials and keeping student records. Individual subject departments offered some of all of their subjects externally. Lectures within the departments taught these external subjects as part of their regular duties. There have been changes in location, involvement and nomenclature, but this system basically still continues. The College now has an administrative External Studies Unit with staff on four sites and the only lecturers who teach solely externally are those in the Graduate Diploma in Distance Education.

The College has five sites: City, Magill, Salisbury, Sturt and Underdale, with 11,120 students, as at 30 April this year, including 2,702 external students. Some lecturers on all sites are involved in external teaching and hundreds of units are offered in some 30 courses including education, business and nursing. You can see the range in the summary table of 1986 courses in the *Guide* in your satchels.

From 1962, library service was provided by Adelaide Teachers College until an External Students Collection was established in the State Library in 1969. The Colleges provided books from their textbook collections as a basis for the collection and paid for new acquisitions as well as the salary of the one staff member. They also paid for interstate postage but the State Library absorbed the cost of postage within the state as well as housing the collection and processing orders.

In 1973, the translation of the teachers colleges into colleges of advanced education and the first of the amalgamations took place. In the period to 1982 the State Library collection came to be used primarily by City and Underdale students. (Magill and Sturt students were serviced from those sites and there was very little external service from Salisbury.) The collection, of some 25,000 volumes was transferred to Underdale at the end of 1984. It is presently housed in a separate building but we hope to move it into the Library building at the end of this year. It will probably be kept separate for at least another year but may eventually be integrated with the other collections.

There are two full time staff at Underdale, with some part time assistance, and specified staff on each of the other sites (except City) who regularly spend part of the their time in service to external students. Bev Parker and Kath Grosser from Underdale, Jill Duff from Sturt and Stephen Krassay from Salisbury are here today. I am the Coordinator of the service and we meet monthly to review progress, make plans and discuss problems.

Nursing students are still serviced direct from Sturt and TESL and Womens Studies from Salisbury but the External Studies Collection is now used as the point of first resort for City, Magill and Underdale students. Items not held in that collection, including all journal articles, are sought in the Underdale collection and then from the other sites if necessary. Additional titles or copies are purchased as required and all requests have been given priority treatment by the acquisitions section this year. We are moving towards further centralisation of the service next year. We provide postal and telephone service and supply photocopies free of charge. Students pay the return postage on items they borrow. We offer a reference service, including free computer searches, but most enquiries are satisfied manually.

A 008 telephone was installed in the External Studies Collection in January. Students from anywhere in Australia outside the Adelaide metropolitan area can ring for the cost of a local call and an answering machine records messages after hours. 760 calls resulting in requests have been received to date, including 215 after hours calls. There have also been 100 non-library calls regarding enrolment and other administrative and academic matters and 20 calls for Hydron Australia Pty Ltd. After allocating us a number, Telecom also gave it to Hydron and although Hydron graciously relinquished it, Telecom have been confused ever since and have not yet been able to provide us with accurate statements of usage or accounts. So, I am sorry but I cannot give you a costing on the service.

SACAE Library offers personal borrowing access to external students of other institutions on their own recognisance, in the same way that we do to other community borrowers, and indemnifies SACAE students who seek borrowing access from other libraries.

We are still getting our act together but progress has been made. Usage figures to the end of July are higher than for the whole of last year in most categories. 1120 students have used the external service but some of these are registered on more than on site and we estimate that approximately 850 different students are involved. In addition, approximately one-third of SACAE's external students live in the Adelaide metropolitan area and some of them use the Library in person, although we do not know how many.

We have held two seminars this year with external studies administrators, lecturers and students and plan to continue these. Bev Parker is currently engaged in attempting to extract *current* reading lists from lecturers for next year. There have been more compliments than complaints so far, and I would like to conclude by quoting from one complimentary letter:

> Many thanks for your diligence in seeking out material and photo copies made. It has been much appreciated.
>
> I tried External Study some 15-16 years ago and cooperation of this quality was unknown. I have hope of success this time, with support such as you offer and the speed of despatch. I am completely overwhelmed, but favourably.
>
> Am I required to return the photo copies?

Janet Martin
Deputy Librarian
Gippsland Institute of Advanced Education

LIBRARY SERVICES TO EXTERNAL STUDENTS IN THE AUSTRALIAN REGIONAL COLLEGES

This paper is concerned with the libraries of the Australian Regional Colleges. The Australian Regional Colleges are an informally organised collection of eleven Colleges of Advanced Education scattered along the eastern coast of Australia, and also including Darwin.

These colleges are Darwin, Capricornia, Darling Downs, Northern Rivers, Mitchell, Riverina, Gippsland, Tasmania, Bendigo, Ballarat and Warrnambool.

Most of the colleges were established in the sixties and seventies, but some were based on much older colleges, founded in the nineteenth century; Ballarat and Bendigo were partly based on their old Schools of Mines, founded in 1870 and 1873 respectively, and Riverina on the Wagga Agricultural College (founded 1892). Others were based on Teachers Colleges, Institutes of Technology and Technical Colleges. The only colleges which started from scratch in the seventies, in fact, were Tasmania and Darwin.

Of the eleven Regional Colleges, only Ballarat does not offer teaching by the external mode. Of the remaining ten, all started external teaching in the seventies. Mitchell was first in 1971, Gippsland, Riverina and Warrnambool in 1972, and Northern Rivers and Tasmania as the last starters in 1978. Bendigo ceased external teaching in 1983, but is still 'minding' 31 external students.

The Regional Colleges are all deemed to be 'located in or near a provincial centre, sufficently remote from the capital city and its associated urban area to be seen to be geographically distinct.' However, Gippsland is the exception, or variation from this definition. It is the only Regional College which is not located adjacent to a provincial centre. For example, Darling Downs is located in Toowoomba, which has a population of approximately 80,000, Riverina's main campus is in Wagga, with a population of 48,000, and the other campus is in Albury with a population of 37,000 for the city. Mitchell is located in Bathurst, with a population of 23,000 for the city, and Orange (population 31,000) and Lithgow (20,000) an hour's drive away. Gippsland is located in the Latrobe Valley, which has a population of approximately 70,000, but which does not include a large provincial centre of population. The three largest centres are Traralgon (18,000) Morwell (17,000) and Moe (17,000). The remaining population is spread widely into smaller communities such as Churchill (population 6,700) which is the township nearest to the Gippsland Institute, and rural farming and dairying communities.

The importance of this variation between Gippsland and the other Regional Colleges is the level of other library resources

available in the district in which the college is situated. The provincial cities such as Toowoomba support more-or-less adequate public libraries, which are available to College students. On the other hand, in the Latrobe Valley, Morwell and Traralgon have combined to provide a Latrobe Valley Regional Library Service, with a combined bookstock of approximately 82,000 volumes, serving three branches and a bookmobile; but Moe (population 17,000) has chosen to go it alone, and runs its own library service, with two branches, and spending $8819 for books, serials and binding in the 1982/3 financial year. In the Annual Report for 1982/3 they do not mention bookstock, but only expenditure!

In other words, Gippsland Institute (bookstock approximately 67,000 volumes) is the backup for the local public libraries, not the other way around.

However, to return to my research and the research instrument: a questionnaire was sent out to the Librarians of the ten Australian Regional Colleges which are offering studies by the external teaching mode. In this way there is a difference in my research from that of, say Meg Cameron and Andrew Winter's survey, which was from the library user's point of view. Mine was from the library service provider's point of view, as at the time I commenced my research I suspected that we (Gippsland) were not doing enough in providing library services to our external students, and thought it would be interesting (and probably illuminating) to find out what other Regional Colleges were doing.

The mere fact that we figure with monotonous regularity as one of the greatest users of the CAVAL Reciprocal Borrowing Scheme was another thought at the back of my mind. In other words, we expect Chisholm (both Caulfield and Frankston), Deakin, MCAE Carlton and RMIT, as the major nests for our cuckoos, to provide a service for our students, instead of doing it ourselves. The majority of our external students are resident in Greater Melbourne.

The first main survey-type question which was asked was one concerning student numbers: Internal Fulltime, Internal Parttime, External Fulltime, External Parttime as of 30 April 1984, the CTEC cutoff date for 1984.

Figures given for Internal Fulltime ranged from 1724 for Darling Downs, 1510 for Bendigo, 1273 for Riverina, 1256 for Mitchell down to 592 for Warrnambool and 549 for Gippsland. Figures given for Internal Parttime ranged from 3343 for Darwin, 1960 for Capricornia down to 171 for Gippsland and 147 for Warrnambool.

External Students fulltime were given as 88 for Gippsland and 1 for Warrnambool. (Gippsland defines an external student/fulltime as one who is enrolled in four units/subjects.)

External parttime range from 3435 for Riverina, 3304 for Mitchell, 2369 for Darling Downs, 1867 for Gippsland, 1524 for Capricornia, 979 for Warrnambool down to 31 for Bendigo, which

is only just 'minding' the last vestiges of a course which has now been phased out.

Sum totals for each category are: Internal Fulltime - 10,407; Internal Parttime - 8055+; External Fulltime - 89; External Parttime - 14,470.

Already we can see some sort of a pattern emerging: three of the four largest colleges are enrolling external students at almost double or treble the rate of their internal student enrolments: Riverina, Mitchell and Darling Downs. Next cab off the rank in External numbers is Gippsland, with 1867 + 88 = 1955 enrolments. Hot on the trail of Darling Downs for external numbers, but what are Gippsland providing their students in services?

Table 1 - Student Enrolments

STUDENT ENROLMENTS AT 30-4-84	INTERNAL FULL-TIME	INTERNAL PART-TIME	EXTERNAL FULL-TIME	EXTERNAL PART-TIME	TOTALS
BENDIGO	1510	629	-	31	2170
CAPRICORNIA	828	1960	-	1524	4312
DARLING DNS	1724	364	-	2369	4457
DARWIN	824	3343	-	130	4297
GIPPSLAND	549	171	88	1867	2675
MITCHELL	1256	257	-	3304	4817
NTHN RIVERS	727	242	-	198	1167
RIVERINA	1273		-	3435	
TASMANIA	1124	924	-	633	2699
WARRNAMBOOL	592	147	1	979	1719
	10,407	8055+	89	14,470	33,021+

To service these students we have a total of 1510 Academic Fulltime staff and 844 General Fulltime staff. Gippsland uses a truly mindboggling number of Parttime staff: a headcount of 135 Academic Partime staff, with an EFT of 16, and a headcount of 152 of General Parttime staff, with an EFT of 13.

The next question to be asked was 'Do you allow local students to enrol externally?' All respondents answered 'Yes'. The largest enrolment in this category was Gippsland, with 439 of its total enrolment of 1955 externals. Mitchell follows with 224. In many cases, Gippsland has found it more economical to enrol internal students externally in certain units, when unit enrolments of 2 or 3 could be avoided by doing so. 'Just bung them out a set of study guides and she'll be right'. Economy

is fine, but is it education? To be fair to Gippsland, there is a tremendous lecture space problem, and lectures have to be held in hallways, staff rooms, and lecturers' rooms, as there is no lecture room which can hold more than 60 people. And during weekend and vacation schools, classes are held in the Council Room, the Assistant Director's office, and the local hall usually used for kids' gymnastics and as a polling place. In fact, in 1985, the Library has lost two rooms used as group discussion rooms for classroom and lecturer accommodation, and one just has to hope and pray that we do get them back some time.

The largest proportion of Mitchell's external students are resident in metropolitan centres (1755) with a further 1629 scattered throughout the state. Gippsland does not separate these two categories, but has 1458 students in this group. Warrnambool has the largest enrolment of students resident outside the state, with 235, including 49 'international'. Mitchell has the next largest, 192.

'Units offered' was the next question asked. Mitchell, not surprisingly, was the biggest provider, with 218 offered internally only, 246 externally only, 47 in both modes. Gippsland followed (amongst the respondents) with 187 internally only, 46 externally only, 164 in both modes. Tasmania offered 21 degrees or diplomas internally only, 2 externally only, and 16 in both modes. Northern Rivers offered 10 degrees or diplomas internally only, 4 externally only, and one in both modes.

The next section was concerned with the services offered to students either by the college or by the library. No college provided a 008 telephone service, and Mitchell is the only library, although Darling Downs hopes that one may be available in 12 months, and Gippsland's request for one has gone into the 'too hard' basket in Administration.

Only Bendigo and Darling Downs, do not have a college telephone answering service for after hours, but the only *libraries* which do provide one are Riverina and Tasmania. Bendigo, Capricornia, Darling Downs, Darwin and Riverina have a college Telex, Tasmania a library Telex. Gippsland has to be different, of course. There is a Telex in the Institute, but it is in the Gippsland branch of the University Cooperative Bookshop! ACImail is used only by Darling Downs. All ten libraries expect students to pay the postage for parcels which they post to the library, but Riverina (college) Capricornia (library) and Mitchell (both college and library) provide a courier service outwards from the college, paid for by the college. Tasmania provides a courier service inwards, paid for by the college.

All ten colleges provide study guides, lecture notes, and books of 'Readings' for external students. Eight colleges hold Weekend Schools, Darwin does not. These are compulsory at Bendigo, Capricornia and Tasmania, and 'variable' at the others. (No answer from Darling Downs.) Compulsory Vacation Schools are held by Bendigo and Capricornia, and non-compulsory ones are held at Darling Downs, Gippsland, Riverina and Warrnambool. (No answer from Tasmania.)

Compulsory Short Courses are held at Gippsland, not held by the others, with no answer from Bendigo, Darling Downs and Tasmania. Compulsory Residential Courses are held by Bendigo, Darwin, Gippsland ,and Mitchell, of 'variable' compulsion by Riverina and Warrnambool, not held by Capricornia and Northern Rivers. (No answer Darling Downs and Tasmania.)

All ten colleges provide on-campus counselling services, with persons who are publicised as such, in handbooks, etc. And all ten provide 'How to study' advice.

Mitchell adds that they provide course advice through Deans and Course Coordinators, careers advice through Student Services, and scholarship advice through the TEAS office; Riverina adds that the Student Services Officer provides advice on career, financial matters and courses.

Northern Rivers is the only college which does not provide accommodation for external students in the form of internal students residences or other forms of on-campus accommodation; Gippsland does so only for Vacation Schools. Darwin currently has residences under construction.

Most colleges provide their external students with billetted accommodation or lists of local motels with their prices etc. (No reply from Darling Downs, Darwin and Tasmania.)

Eight colleges have Student Centres or Study Centres for their external students to use; Bendigo has ceased external teaching, of course, so there is no need for them. The other is Northern Rivers. The numbers of study centres provided range from two for Riverina and Mitchell, three for Darwin and Tasmania, 4 for Capricornia, 6 for Gippsland, 7 for Warrnambool to 14 for Darling Downs. Capricornia specifies that their 4 centres all have library facilities, but that there are 'many other study centres with computer facilities'. Darling Downs' 14 are 'scattered throughout Queensland' and some are joint facilities with Queensland University. Mitchell's two are a study centre at Broken Hill, and at Macquarie University in Sydney, where there is access to the computer link between Sydney and Mitchell. Warrnambool's 7 are located in the local public or regional libraries in each town.

Some form of staffing is provided in all of the Study Centres for Darwin, Gippsland, Riverina, Tasmania and Warrnambool. Warrnambool notes that this is 'on a visiting basis'. Capricornia, Darling Downs and Mitchell provide staffing at some of their centres.

The second main section of the questionnaire was concerned with information relating to the library, its staffing, size of collections, hours of opening, seating, etc. A separate section concerned specifically with services provided for external students followed later.

The first part of this section was library staffing: professional, paraprofessional, library assistants, administrative, secretarial and 'other' along the lines of the AARL statistics. Total staff ranged from 36 for Riverina, to 12.5 for Warrnambool.

Table 2 - Library Staffing

	PROFES.	PARA-PROFES.	LIBRARY ASSTS.	ADMIN.	SECRT.	OTHER	TOTALS
BENDIGO	7	3	9.5	--	.5	--	20
CAPRICORNIA	10	5	--	6.5	2	5	28.5
DARLING DNS	8	--	9	--	3.5	7.3	27.8
DARWIN	10	6	6	1	2	--	25
GIPPSLAND	8	1	6.5	--	2	--	17.5
MITCHELL	8	1.5	3	8	2	1	23.5
NTHN RIVERS	6.5	4	4	--	1	--	15.5
RIVERINA	12.5	7.5	5	2	4	5	36
TASMANIA	8.9	4	9.2	--	.7	--	22.8
WARRNAMBOOL	4	3	1	3.5	1	--	12.5
	162.4	44	53.2	27.5	18.7	18.3	229.1

Only a small fraction of staff time was devoted to external student matters in most cases. Riverina is the only library which has a professional librarian whose responsiblilty is for external student services.

The next question concerned the size of the library's collection.

The size of the monograph collections ranged from 156,000 volumes for Mitchell, 140,193 for Riverina, 120,000 for Darling Downs down to 67,385 for Gippsland and 48,036 for Northern Rivers.

Guesstimates for a percentage of multiple copies in the collections ranged from 5-10% for Gippsland and Tasmania, 10% for Darwin, 15% for Bendigo and Capricornia, 20% for Mitchell, Northern Rivers and Riverina, to 30% for Warrnambool. Darling Downs did not answer.

Table 3 - Library Collection Sizes

	MONOGRAPHS	SERIALS	MICROFORMS	NONBOOK MATERIALS	OTHER	DUPS
BENDIGO	81,819	20,000	305	3,000	--	15
CAPRICORNIA	103,975	n.a.	6,980	2,809	6,410	15
DARLING DNS	120,000	30,000 items				n.a.
DARWIN	105,000	1,000*	500*	15,000*	--	10
GIPPSLAND	67,385	1,200	3,141	30,000 items		5-10
MITCHELL	156,000	3,000	--	45,000	in mon.	20
NTHN RIVERS	48,036	775	--	5,975	--	20
RIVERINA	140,193	1,440	3,733	47,780		20
TASMANIA	106,443	1,348	6,493	33,045	in mon.	5-10
WARRNAMBOOL	73,300 + TAFE 13,500	1,509	--	22,000	6,560 items	30
	1,015,651					

* - Approximate

A question now needs to be asked: Is a college with 1955 external students, a library collection of 67,385 and only 5-10% multiple copies offering much of a service? Particularly when an examination of the replies to the question on hours of opening indicates that this same library is open for nearly the shortest number of hours per week and only open during the weekends when there is a weekend or vacation school.

Numbers of seats for readers ranged from 400 for Darling Downs, 320 for Mitchell, 260 for Capricornia, 240 for Bendigo to 130 for Gippsland and 90 for Warrnambool. I should add that some 30 of the seats at Gippsland are substandard examination tables, not proper carrells and all are overcrowded. In 1985 we even have a row of four four-seater carrells outside the library in a corridor as we had no floorspace inside the library for them. Some students seem to prefer them, as they can smoke, eat and generally carry on regardless outside.

Unfortunately, we can't moan too loudly about not having enough seats because of the new so-called standards issued by CTEC early this year -- if we had to stick to those we'd only have about 55 seats, which is 10% of our internal EFTs. But the situation becomes absolutely chaotic at the weekend schools when anything up to 1000 external students, with attendant spouses and kids all converge on the Institute for several days.

The next part of the questionnaire concerned facilities offered by the library. All ten colleges provide coin-operated photocopiers; Bendigo, Darwin, Gippsland, Northern Rivers, Riverina and Warrnambool have staff-operated photocopiers. We have only had ours since early this year, and then only because of some convoluted deal worked out by our Purchasing Officer, but the saving of staff time, in not having to queue up for the public machines has probably paid for the machine already!

All ten colleges have microform readers and printers.

All ten colleges have facilities for group and individual television viewing, but Darwin and Gippsland cannot offer 'off-air' viewing. In fact, one of the rooms we lost recently because of timetabling problems was used for group video viewing, so this facility is almost in limbo for the time being.

All colleges except Gippsland provide group movie viewing facilities; Darwin only for up to ten people, and Northern Rivers video only. Gippsland can only show movies in rooms other than in the Library, and on projectors provided by the Audiovisual Department. We do not own a movie projector.

All ten colleges provide individual audio listening facilities, but Capricornia, Gippsland and Northern Rivers do not provide group audio facilities. I did notice last week that one of our English lecturers had been attempting a bit of self-help by using one of our superannuated cassette players to play a cassette of English regional dialect to a group of his students. We have a record turntable, tuner, speakers, and records, but nowhere to play them.

Other audiovisual facilities provided by various colleges include slide and slide/tape viewers, filmstrip projectors, light-tables, microcomputers, and individual or group access to the college mainframe computer.

The only restrictions noted in these services are that Bendigo states that equipment after hours is available from Media Services, not the Library, and Mitchell states that 'advance booking may be required for material normally on closed access or for use of specific rooms. Films, especially, need booking'.

All ten colleges offer online bibliographical searches: Darwin notes 'but not to external students'. Gippsland and Darwin charge the teaching department concerned, at Tasmania the Library pays, at Bendigo the student pays, at Capricornia and Darling Downs the Library and the student pay, and a combination of library-student-teaching department applies for the remaining colleges.

The next item concerned the format of the library catalogue: card, microfiche, OPAC or combination. Tasmania and Warrnambool have card catalogues, Darwin and Northern Rivers microfiche, Capricornia has OPAC, Darling Downs has card plus OPAC, and will be all OPAC by the end of 1986. Gippsland and Mitchell have card plus microfiche; Mitchell will go OPAC in 1986. Bendigo and Riverina are a combination of methods. Bendigo, Darwin and Gippsland are in ABN, Warrnambool is not. Mitchell, Northern Rivers and Riverina are in CLANN.

Library circulation systems was the next question. Bendigo, Darwin, Gippsland, Mitchell, Northern Rivers and Tasmania have manual systems. Bendigo will have URICA after third term 1985, Mitchell will have GEAC in 1986, and Gippsland is hoping for URICA in 1986, if VPSEC is kind to us. Of the automated systems, Capricornia and Darling Downs use VTLS, Riverina uses CIRSYS, and Warrnambool uses a home grown batch system, but is keeping its collective fingers crossed for URICA in 1986, like Gippsland.

Following on circulation systems came library lending policy. Mitchell, Gippsland, Northern Rivers and Warrnambool report 'No limit' for staff, which I found quite interesting, as this is Mister Big and the three smallest ones in collection size. The others ranged from 6 for Tasmania, 10 for Capricornia, Darling Downs and Riverina, 12 for Bendigo and 20 for Darwin fulltime lecturers.

Things are different for students. Only Mitchell has no limit. Darling Downs restricts but does not enforce 4, Gippsland states 4, plus extra nonbook materials, Bendigo, Capricornia, Northern Rivers and Warrnambool are 5, Tasmania 6, and Riverina and Darwin are 10.

Length of loan to staff also varies; from 2 weeks for Tasmania, 3 weeks for Riverina, 4 weeks or 1 month for Bendigo, Capricornia, Darling Downs, Northern Rivers and Warrnambool, 6 weeks Mitchell, to Semester Loans for Darwin and Gippsland. Darwin says 'for teaching purposes only'. Gippsland is only generous because the former one month loan period with consequent overdues was taking up too much staff time to chase up. Now it only happens twice a year.

Length of loan to students ranges from 1 week for Bendigo and Mitchell internals, 2 weeks for Capricornia, Darling Downs internals, Darwin, Gippsland internals and Tasmania internals, 2-3 weeks for Northern Rivers, and three weeks for Riverina. Most colleges also had varying lengths of loan for particular categories of materials, such as 2 hours or overnight for closed reserve material, 1, 2, or 3 day loans, and one week for serials to staff.

Next question was on library publications. All 10 colleges issued a library guide for students in 1985; Capricornia, Darwin, Gippsland, Mitchell, Northern Rivers also issued a separate guide for staff.

Reader education for internal students was next. All 10 colleges reported that library staff did reader education, Darling Downs stating 'individually if necessary'. Some reader education was done by teaching staff at Bendigo, Gippsland for specific units only, Mitchell rarely, and Warrnambool. Capricornia, Darling Downs, Darwin, Northern Rivers and Riverina replied that it was *not* done by teaching staff alone. Joint classes were carried out at Bendigo, Mitchell, Northern Rivers, Riverina, Tasmania and Warrnambool, and were *not* carried out at Capricornia, Darling Downs, Darwin and Gippsland.

Next was the section concerned specifically with library services for external students.

None of the 10 libraries has a separate library for their external students, but Capricornia has a separate collection for them.

Capricornia, Mitchell, Northern Rivers and Warrnambool reported that they did not have any geographical limitations to their service to externals. Mitchell added a rider that students resident outside Australia are encouraged to use other libraries.

Darling Downs lends only within Australia. Darwin reports that most of their own students are resident within the NT, but if they move away the Library continues to service them until they have finished. There is an additional note that the greater volume of activity with external students is their servicing of NT residents who are external students of *other* institutions. I imagine a few Melbourne colleges feel just the same about Gippsland students. Gippsland does not post materials to students resident in the Latrobe Valley, a radius of about 40kms, Riverina's radius is 50kms, Tasmania's 40kms.

Eight colleges produce a library guide for external students as a separate publication. Bendigo produces one guide for students, staff and externals, Mitchell has a special section in the student guide. All produced a guide in 1985, except for Warrnambool.

Reader education for external students was carried out by library staff at Darling Downs, Gippsland, Mitchell, Riverina and Tasmania; Tasmania holds library tours for some students. None of the colleges reported that teaching staff did reader education for externals, and only Mitchell and Riverina reported rare joint classes. Warrnambool made a general comment that 'there is a general policy of providing classes by demand. Nothing so far this year.'

All ten libraries accept library requests by phone -- Darwin for externals only. In answer to the question 'Do you actually encourage requests by phone?', Bendigo, Capricornia and Darling Downs replied 'No', the other seven said 'Yes'.

All ten accept library requests by mail.

Eight libraries will accept loan renewals by phone or by mail; Darwin answered 'No', as the initial loan period for externals is one month, and Mitchell stated that renewals were not permitted for external students: their loan period was one month also.

All ten libraries post requested materials to external students, and all ten allow additional time for these loans. Capricornia and Northern Rivers allow an additional week, Warrnambool an additional 2 weeks, Bendigo and Tasmania 3 weeks extra, Darwin and Mitchell 4 weeks and Darling Downs 40 days. Gippsland noted that normal loans to external students were usually until the next weekend school (4 weeks), 3-day loans were made 1 week if postage one way, 10 days if postage both ways was necessary. Riverina reported that additional time was 'at the discretion of the External Studies Librarian. 2 day loans are sent with a request to return within 2 days of receipt'.

In answer to the question 'Do you undertake interlibrary loans for external students?', Darling Downs and Darwin said 'No', Mitchell 'rarely', Riverina 'not officially'; the other 6 said 'yes'. Riverina and Capricornia did not undertake ILL's for books, Mitchell did so rarely, Bendigo, Gippsland, Northern Rivers, Tasmania and Warrnambool answered 'Yes'. Eight libraries did ILLs for photocopies of articles: Darling Downs and Darwin had already said no.

Nine colleges did photocopies for external students: no answer from Darwin. The libraries of Northern Rivers and Warrnambool pay for these photocopies; the other 7 charge the student: no answer from Darwin.

A question on reciprocal borrowing arrangements followed. Bendigo, Gippsland and Warrnambool belong to the CAVAL Reciprocal Borrowing Scheme, Mitchell, Riverina and Northern Rivers are in the CLANN scheme. Riverina also provides letters of introduction to other libraries, Northern Rivers has a reciprocal arrangement with Brisbane CAEs. Capricornia and Darling Downs are in the ALCAE (Qld) reciprocal scheme; Capricornia with additional specific institutions. Darwin had already mentioned that they had very few students interstate; Tasmania reported that 'all mainland CAE libraries gave permission for our Agricultural Business Management students to borrow'.

Nine libraries do online bibliographical searches for external students, with the same arrangements for payment as for internal students, Darwin does not.

A section on the Student Centres followed.

Bendigo and Northern Rivers have no study centres; Darwin has no books in the three study centres but used to put books in at Nhulunbuy, Tasmania has books at Burnie and Devonport in the Tasmanian State Library system.

Capricornia, Darling Downs, Gippsland, Mitchell, Riverina and Warrnambool have books deposited in the study centres (Gippsland both in the study centres and in public libraries near the study centres). The number of books deposited varies from 30 to 1500; Darling Downs and Warrnambool deposit them regularly, Capricornia, Gippsland, Mitchell and Tasmania occasionally, and Darwin and Riverina 'not any more'.

All study centres have some sort of staffing, usually a clerical officer, on a casual or part-time basis; Warrnambool uses the public library staff.

Where books are deposited, a booklist is available at Capricornia, Gippsland and Warrnambool, an online listing can become available at the Darling Downs centres, the whole Mitchell catalogue is available at Mitchell centres, and the Gippsland microfiche is available at Gippsland centres.

The next question concerned monitoring of library services to external students; Capricornia, Darwin, Gippsland, Riverina and

Warrnambool did some sort of monitoring, the other five did not. Warrnambool used evaluation slips, Gippsland and Riverina used questionnaires (Gippsland only in the past, not recently). Gippsland and Riverina used a suggestions/complaints box, Capricornia, Darwin, Gippsland and Riverina used verbal methods. 'Other' methods included 'normal loan statistics and records of registrations' and an additional note that 'our own external courses are notes based, and demand very little backup' (Darwin); Riverina used maintenance of records of request fulfilment rate; Warrnambool had 'separate representation on the Library Liaison Committee'.

The next question concerned library budgets for 1985, and expenditures for 1984, and budget catagories specifically for external student services. Mitchell, not surprisingly, is top in this category.

The antepenultimate question asked if libraries were planning services for the future specifically for external students. Darling Downs is planning for an 008 telephone maybe within 12 months; Gippsland has asked for the same, but it is generally felt that this is unlikely to go ahead; Riverina ia planning a Reader Education video which would be available for loan; Warrnambool plans that 'when the library is automated on the URICA system, we plan to offer online searching on the library database with ACImail-type reservation of required items, or requests for other services.

The penultimate question asked 'How would you like to see your library's services to external students improved?'

Gippsland replied: 008 telephone line; Institute funding of return post of returned material; a library after-hours phone; automated circuation system. Mitchell replied: College to meet costs of returning library materials; increased fund for multiple copies; the staff are fully stretched, any expansion of services is dependent on extra staff. Northern Rivers replied: 008 telephone line; user services/orientation session at least at introductory weekend session; pre-semester questionnaires at end of each semester for feedback, suggestions, etc. Riverina replied: More staff whose particular job is external students' work; funds for more multiple copies; funds for use of courier services; ability of students to dial-up the catalogue. Warrnambool replied: All tertiary education institutions to provide reciprocal borrowing rights to bona fide students from other institutions on production of current ID card.

The ultimate section was for comments.

Darwin replied: We have many students whom we service who are NT residents enrolled in interstate courses. The college has an NT External Studies Centre to support them... NT residents in interstate courses do not benefit from reciprocal borrowing rights. These rights help metropolitan students where there *are* other libraries. It is paradoxical that students with *most* need, i.e. they can *only* study externally, are remote and have no alternatives, are receiving the least attention.

Mitchell replied: Our external students are much more likely to retain library materials than internal. An awareness of the needs of future students would be helpful!! Compulsory residential schools provide excellent opportunities for library use. 008 phone our best service feature for external students.

Tasmania replied: A list of books of interest to external students (external studies library list) produced in microfiche.

Warrnambool replied: existing CAVAL registration procedures require home institution to verify student enrolment - can delay access for up to 1 month. Would prefer automatic enrolment with subsequent verification if required. Would prefer institutions to provide automatic renewal of reciprocal borrowing upon current home institution identification being produced, without need for new registration annually.

Well, that was the end of the questionnaire, and the preliminary analysis of the results. The most obvious points which float to the surface are that Mitchell, with the biggest collection and 20% duplicates in the collection appears to be the leader in provision of services. They would still like more funds for multiple copies, and for extra staff, as the existing staff are flat to the boards now. And, near the bottom of the heap if not at the bottom, is Gippsland, I am afraid, if we look at size of library collection, hours of opening, number of reader seats, and funding. However I have not finished digging around yet: maybe I will find *something* we are doing right!

Denys Meakin
Director of Student Services
Open Learning Institute

STUDENT SUPPORT IN LIGHTLY POPULATED REGIONS

First of all, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to meet with you at this seminar. You are dealing with an important issue, and one which does not always receive the attention it deserves.

I would like to spend a few minutes explaining my perspective, and mentioning some wider issues. I am a Director of Student Services, and I am concerned about student services as a whole. Although my responsibilities do not cover instructional matters, these often spill over. Let us just look at the range of services which must be considered:

- Assistance with access to learning.
- Selection of program, and individual courses within the program, in accordance with the student's objectives; this may include some career planning.
- Financial assistance.
- The contents of the course package - not the academic content, but information regarding administrative arrangements, including library services.
- Tutorial services.
- Study skills, time management, personal problem resolution.
- Access to learning resources, including library resources.

In many courses, library service is far from being the most important factor. In fact our course designers constantly debate. The problem:

> Do you do as much as possible to make a course package fully self-contained, or do you build in components which try to force students to use library services?

The result of the first option in some of our courses is that they contain massive compilations of readings. Whilst this is comfortable for most students, particularly isolated ones, and it is perhaps acceptable in a significant part of a student's program, it is my view, and I am sure most of you share this view with me, that an essential part of a post-secondary education is learning how to access knowledge for yourself. The problem is how to give this opportunity to a student located a thousand miles away from your institution. In fact, it goes beyond giving opportunity - our experience is that for many students, you have to force them to do it - they will sometimes do all sorts of things to avoid doing what you expect them to. The difficulty is further compounded for new, smaller institutions with limited budgets - it is an awful experience to start building a collection these days. Let us extend the problem even further and assume that you want students to be able to access not just the traditional storehouses of

knowledge - books and journals, but also audio and video tapes, slide collections, even computer software.

Finally, let us make the problem really difficult by assuming that most of your students are spread very thinly over a large, sparsely populated region.

Now I have defined some of the problems, I hope you do not think that I am about to lay out all the solutions, because I do not have them. I have some ideas, but I am sure that you all have some too. So, I have prepared a little exercise to help us collect these ideas. I have prepared a scenario for which I would like you to divide into groups to discuss. I have set it up as a conflict situation; the problems are much easier to resolve if you assume full cooperation from all possible agencies, but that seldom happens. How do you deal with the situation where you need the cooperation of another institution and they see you as a competitor for their students? How do *you* react when another institution asks you for assistance which may place a drain on some of your scarce resources?

I think that it is clear that the most obvious solutions depend on obtaining the cooperation of another institution. This may be relatively simple to obtain if the institutions involved have something they can trade off, like providing service to each other's students. If they do not, problems are likely to arise. This may be particularly true when a big institution is seeking facilities from a small local college which may feel threatened by the competition, or thinks they may be overwhelmed by large numbers of students.

Let us look at the needs of a distance education institution. There is a variety of local facilities that you may want:

Library facilities
- Traditional materials
- Non-traditional materials and equipment to use them
- Special materials of the delivery institution (not normally part of other collections)

Satellite ground station and TV viewing facilities
Space for study centre operations - office and classroom
Laboratory facilities
Examination facilities

In addition, you may want to hire local staff on a contract basis to act as part-time tutors or as exam invigilators, but this is likely done by individual contracts, rather than by inter-institutional agreements. However, do not overlook it as a means of helping generate a favorable attitude towards you.

What can you offer in return? Obviously, you can offer exactly reciprocal arrangements. However, if you are dealing with an institution which has no external program, or has few students within range of your institution, this may be of little benefit. What else can you offer them? Some of the things you might want to consider are:

- Special access to parts of your library collections or services that are not available through the normal interlibrary loan process.
- Make available your distance education course materials for use by the other institution. This has been, by far, our most successful way of bringing institutions over to our side. We sell them materials at our cost of reproduction, and now sell over 10,000 course packages a year. We must realise that today many distance education materials are among the best pedagogical materials available in some subjects. You may also make single copies available free to their library.
- Make special arrangements for the students of the other institution to cross-register, that is to register in one or more of your courses whilst they are registered at the other institution. This could make available to a student a much larger selection of electives. I know that your quota systems may make this option difficult, but you may be able to do it in some special cases.
- Access to any specialised resources or facilities of your institution, by their staff or students.

In dealing with this trading between institutions, I have very deliberately not dealt purely with library services for two reasons. First, you may need more than just library services from another institution, and it is probably better to have an integrated approach, rather than individual approaches at different times, by the exams department, the library and so on. Secondly, what you may have to offer as a quid pro quo may be outside the library area.

We have now considered how you may provide service to students in the larger communities where there are other post-secondary institutions. What about those who live outside the range of one of these?

During the last week, I have had the opportunity to study some of the work that has been done in Australia, in particular the Winter-Cameron report *External students and their libraries*, and the Library Association of Australia publication *Guidelines for library services to external students*. I am not sure that anyone from elsewhere can give you very much advice - you have developed an excellent set of principles, which if rigorously followed, would assure remote students a very high level of service. Since in discussion some of your non-librarian colleagues have indicated that the services do not always work as well as they appear on paper, perhaps I can highlight some of what I consider to be the most important principles:

- The institution should provide full information on how remote students can access library services, and not assume the student is already a sophisticated library user.

- The institution should cover all significant costs involved at least to the extent they are for on-campus students; this is part of the process of equalising access for isolated students. There is often a peculiar reluctance to pick up these sorts of trivial costs, forgetting that these students do not cause you to incur cost of cleaning buildings, providing sports and recreation facilities and so on. Why not charge students who use the library toilets for the cost of janitorial services? Why not rent study carrels?

- Service should be prompt, and preferably by staff whose responsibility and commitment is to external students. The chances are that when a student contacts you for books or information, they are needed now, and further progress may not be possible until they are received.

I would now like to turn my attention to the future. Actually, it is not the future, it is now, except the knowledge on what can be done is not widely known, and the hardware to do it with is not widely available. Again, some of these points were discussed yesterday. Public access computer terminals are becoming more widely available, and a very significant proportion of homes now have personal computers. This opens up a lot of interesting new possibilities:

- 3 Australian institutions already have databases on Viatel; these are the University of New England, Deakin and one other. The information is primarily general institutional material at present, but given the tree-like structure used to organise the information, I can easily visualise how one could use it to simulate a literature search, something a remote student misses out on at present.

- Viatel provides very cheap electronic mail services. Students could use these to request library materials. University of New England students are already communicating with the university by this mechanism.

- Facsimile transmission services. A network of these could provide almost instantaneous transmission of photocopies to any other machine. This includes graphics. This is expensive at present if you use public facilities, but the cost will surely come down.

- Communication between personal computers and the institution's main computer could provide many benefits:

  More sophisticated electronic mail service, including the ability to upload and download large amounts of text rapidly. Students could send assignments in this way. Libraries could make available text materials for students to

download. The problem here is that the materials must be in digital form. However, optical scanners are getting very sophisticated these days. This brings an interesting question to my mind. If you digitise a copyright work and transmit it electronically to the students, where are we in relation to copyright law? Also, think of the plagarism possibilities when students can then start to work on such text with their word processor!
Online access to the institution's library catalogue.
Access to research databases set up for specific courses.

There could be significant telephone connect time involved in some of these applications; however I believe that you have the data package transmission facility that we have in North America available here. This network should be available by local call in most larger communities. To give you some idea of the costs involved, it costs little more than $1 to transmit a 70 page document across Canada.

Another electronic mail service is available through Minerva, which again is very cheap. This can be accessed by any personal computer or terminal equipped with a modem. Most Canadian libraries use the Canadian equivalent of this, known as Envoy, for interlibrary communications, and communicating with publishers. Minerva also offers a computer conferencing facility, which, in my view, offers many advantages over teleconferencing.

I have made an assumption that people are generally familiar with concepts I have mentioned, even if they have not used them. If necessary, I will be glad to provide further information during question period or during the break.

- Going a little further into the future, I am sure that we will start to see more applications of the video disk. The standard ones now available contain in excess of 50,000 images which are randomly retrievable. One such disk could contain all the research material needed for a given course. As librarians, you are probably more familiar than I am with what is going on in this area, but I understand that the US Library of Congress is archiving its collections on large videodisks which contain millions of images on each one.

Finally I will tell you a little bit about what we are doing, or not doing, at the Open Learning Institute. We were established in 1978 as a purely distance education institution with a mandate to deliver:

- First degrees in Arts and Science.
- Programs in adult basic education.
- Career, technical and vocational programs.
- Continuing education courses.

We now deliver over 16,000 courses to 9,000 students each year, and are still growing at about 15% per year. British Columbia is about the same area as South Australia and Victoria combined, and our students are very widely dispersed, although about half live in our two major cities, Vancouver and Victoria. I have to admit that we do not meet one of your major guidelines - we were not funded to build a library collection. We have a small professional library for staff use, and this is probably one of the leading collections of works relating to distance education in North America. We have overcome the problem of library services for students by contracting with Simon Fraser University to provide services. In effect, that library has become our library. For that we pay $10,000 per year. Simon Fraser augmented their collection in certain areas to meet our needs.

In addition to this, we have a network of 14 community colleges spread around the province. All make their collections available to the local community; there was initially some resentment that OLI students would be taking advantage of this, and some feared that it might strain resources. There were even suggestions that they would try to identify patrons as OLI students, and that OLI should pay for the service provided. I think that prospect has now died. In fact, our students do not appear to be heavy library users, and that brings me back to one of my opening comments - if you want students to use library services, you need to build in components to force students to do it.

SIMULATION EXERCISE

Lower Academia is a country with an area of almost 1 million square kilometres of tough terrain, ranging from steep-sided, snow-capped mountains to dense, trackless forest. Population is approximately 1.5 million, 75% of whom live in the one major city (Superior) in the northeast corner of the state. The economy is largely natural resource based, resulting in a large number of small communities located wherever the resources are exploited. Transportation is difficult, particularly during winter. Two of the communities have populations approaching 50,000 and provide some regional leadership. All the others are much smaller.

Education is state controlled. Until recently, there were just 4 post-secondary institutions:

> University of Lower Academia (ULA) located in Superior. A long-established, 'respectable' university with a full range of faculties. Through its control of admission and graduation standards, the university firmly believes that it sets the education standards for the country.
>
> Lower Academia Institute of Technology (LAIT), also located in Superior, offers two year diploma programs. Strongly oriented towards business and industry, it generally ignores the rest of the education system.

Each of the other two 'major' communities have recently established community colleges, Northern Lower Academia Community College (NLACC), and Southern Lower Academia Community College (SLACC). These colleges offer the first two years of a degree program by arrangement with ULA, and a variety of career programs. Money does not come easily to these colleges, and they have to work hard to attract students.

Two recent events, possible related, have occurred:

a) the economy turned bad and the government introduced cutbacks in many areas, including education.

b) the government announced a new distance education institution (Lower Academia Institute for Distance Education or LAIDE) with degree granting status. There was no prior consultation with the existing education institutions. The mission of the new institution is to bring higher education to all parts of the country.

The first staff of LAIDE have now been appointed, and are wrestling with the problems of delivering education over 1 million square kilometres. They are facing hostility from all of the existing institutions who see the likelihood of scarce funds being diverted to the new institution. In fact the Faculty Associations of NLACC and SLACC are proclaiming that the government's next action will be to close down the two colleges and rely on the new institution to provide service. ULA staff are completely sceptical of the whole thing.

The principal of LAIDE realises that he needs help from the other institutions, since his budget is also very limited and needs to go mainly into course development. He has called a meeting of representatives of the other institutions, including on the agenda as two main items regional tutorial services and regional library services. In attendance at the meeting are:

from LAIDE:	President, Dean of Instruction
from ULA:	Vice-President Academic, Librarian
from NLACC:	Principal, Librarian
from SLACC:	Dean of Instruction, Librarian

The President of LAIDE chaired the meeting. LAIT, as usual, ignored the meeting.

In your group, appoint one person to each of the above postitions. You have 15-20 minutes to conduct your negotiations. The President of LAIDE in each group will then report back to the session on what was achieved.

Margaret Maticka
Head of Reader Services
Dixson Library, University of New England

REFERENCE SERVICES FOR EXTERNAL STUDENTS: LIBRARY SUPPORT FOR DISTANCE EDUCATION BEYOND THE PROVISION OF SET TEXTS AND READINGS

It is easy to find authorities for the assertion that the library is the core of the tertiary institution. The Australian Universities Council said in 1981,

> University libraries are essential elements in the teaching and research aspects of all universities, and with the rapid expansion of knowledge and publications in both the sciences and the humanities and the changes in the means of storing and retrieving information, university libraries have an important role to play in keeping the university community up to date.[1]

Yet it seems clear that, for external students at least, the university library does not play a central role in their education.

It is important that we look at this problem. We need to try to assess the difference between the services we provide for our internal, and our external students. It is important to try to assess the alternative means which externals use to satisfy their informational needs. It is important that we develop new strategies to overcome the deficiencies which we identify.

In this paper, I intend to look at these issues, by first examining the services provided by my library, the Dixson Library at the University of New England, and at the alternatives available to distant students.

Why do we need to provide more than basic texts and photocopies of recommended journal articles to our undergraduates? It has been argued that undergraduate students, particularly in their early years, make little use of library materials, apart from those placed by lecturers in reserve collections, while depending heavily on a handful of set textbooks.[2] For the external student, booklets of reprints frequently take the place of the reserve collection. While librarians know why, it is worth stating the reasons:

- Set texts may not be available. Alternative material needs to be identified and selected for use.
- Special projects, lengthy essays and reading courses require students to find material independently.
- Students need to develop a critical appreciation of the literature of their subjects through wide contact with it.
- Students need the opportunity to use additional optional material.
- Students headed for academic careers need to develop library skills of a high order.

Is it reasonable to expect to be able to meet such needs through our services to our distant students? Can we really look beyond simply posting specific items to them upon request? If we are serious about providing an equal educational opportunity to external students, we must try.

The University of New England is a small rural institution on the outskirts of the northern NSW town of Armidale. The University has been teaching externally since 1955. Internal students are heavily outnumbered by externals; in 1984 we had under 3000 internals, and almost 6000 externals. Initially most externals were school teachers upgrading qualifications. While teachers still account for almost 30% of all distant students, they are obviously no longer the majority.

The 'New England' model of distance education is well known. Courses offered externally are equivalent to those taught to internal students. All students enrolled in the same course follow the same curriculum, complete the same assignments and take the same examinations. Externals receive a series of course booklets containing discussion material, assignments and reading lists. They may also receive booklets of reprints of journal articles and extracts from monographs (although these have diminished since the last revision of the Copyright Act) and cassette recordings of lectures and other material.

External students attend compulsory residential schools in Armidale, usually in the autumn or spring school vacations (a reminder of the earlier preponderance of school teachers). While on campus, students have usually four days packed with lectures, tutorials and practical sessions, and frequently have to complete assignments or prepare for seminars while on campus.

The system is administered by a separate service department, the Department of External Studies, which has no teaching role. Library services are provided directly by the Dixson Library, although we liaise closely with the External Studies staff.

The Dixson Library services the entire University community, and provides some services to the local community as well. Internal students and academic staff have access to the Library for 77.5 hours per week, may read and borrow from a collection of over half a million items, may consult trained reference staff, use an extensive reference collection, and obtain material from other libraries through the interlibrary loan network.

External students have always been offered a postal loan service, but until 1971, this service was run on behalf of the University by the Public Library of NSW. In 1955, the Dixson Library had neither the resources or the staff to begin such a service, while the Public Library was already offering a postal loan service to country people. As well, it was thought that a service based in Sydney would be more efficient. In 1971 the University was asked to take over the service, and the collection which had been developed at the Public Library was transferred to Armidale. It became the nucleus of the Dixson

Library Teaching Collection, initially reserved for external use,[3] but later made available to internals, and in 1981 was interfiled with the Dixson Library General Collection, which had previously served internal students and academic staff.

The Dixson Library also offers externals a postal photocopy service, and will answer reference enquiries by mail. We are about to offer a telephone request and reference service.

The successful provision of library material beyond set texts and references has four elements: access to trained staff; access to a good library catalogue; access to a good reference collection; and access to a comprehensive collection of monographs and serials. I would like to look now at the way that the Dixson Library provides for these four elements. I must stress that we lay no claim to being particularly innovative in our services, and I would like to return to this point later.

Our students must have access to reference librarians trained in the techniques of finding information and exploiting library resources. Our internal students may consult a reference librarian 77.5 hours per week, to obtain a range of information and assistance, from simple directional information to complex advice on high level library research.

External students need this kind of access too. Access should be immediate, at convenient times, and at low cost. A superior way of providing such access lies in the 088 telephone line, which enables the cost of a long-distance call to be charged to the receiver. Such lines are commonly provided by business, and are now in use in several Australian libraries. The Dixson Library sought to introduce such a telephone service earlier this year, but regrettably the University proved unwilling to fund it, mainly because we had no way to gauge the possible use, and hence the cost of the service. We are about to introduce, on a trial basis, a 'user pays' telephone request and reference service, as a second-best solution. The service will be available in the late afternoon and evening, when a trained reference librarian will accept requests for loans, renewals and reservations, and reference enquiries. At other times an answering machine will record messages.

New technologies have much to offer in facilitating contact between librarian and distant student. Electronic mail allows quick, low cost transmission of messages, and is provided for in the Australian Viatel system, in which the University is involved as an information provider. It is conceivable that students with accesss to Viatel either in their homes or at work will request material and information through this medium. The Library is already receiving requests for information through Viatel from members of the general public.

The Department of External Studies makes use of tele-conferencing, whereby a telephone is used to link a number of students with a tutor. Librarians could also communicate in this way with groups of students, to discuss resources and access to them, and to conduct reader education sessions.

The Department of External Studies also makes regular visits to centres throughout the eastern states to confer with students The librarian could be taken to the student in the same way, taking with him or her selected reference books, bibliographies, copies of the microfiche catalogue and other library materials.

Our students must have access to a comprehensive and easily used catalogue of the Library's holdings. Students need such access, not only to find out if the Library has particular known items, but to discover material using a subject approach.

All material acquired by the Dixson Library since 1975, and a proportion of earlier material, is now recorded in a computerised database. Multiple copies of a microfiche version of this database are produced quarterly, and distributed throughout the Library and the campus. Library users may also access the database online using terminals in the Library building. Material not recorded in the database may be found only in the card catalogue. While retrospective conversion of the records relating to this older material is proceeding, it is unlikely to be completely converted to machine readable form before the mid-1990s.

With the advent of the computerised catalogue, the provision of a library catalogue to every student becomes a possibility, if an expensive one. Our current production costs are about $20 per set, making the distribution of a free copy to each student economically impossible. We do sell superseded copies to students with access to microfiche readers at a nominal cost.

With the increasing ownership of personal computers, it is theoretically possible to offer dialup access to the database; some libraries in Australia and elsewhere offer this facility now. Such access is also possible using Viatel as a 'gateway' and would allow students to consult the catalogue, and to place immediate reservations on the material they want.

A good catalogue for external students should be annotated. While the student on compus may browse through shelves of books looking for the 'right' one, browsing through the post is both expensive and slow. We need to provide students with annotated lists, either in their course booklets, or individually on request.

Bibliographies in course booklets currently produced by the University vary considerably, from brief, sometimes poorly cited lists, to extensive bibliographies with annotations.

Until recently, the responsibility for ensuring that recommended material is actually a part of the Dixson Library collection has rested with course writers. In 1984 we began a program of checking the lists against our catalogues, both to encourage students to quote call numbers when requesting material, and to assist them to find material quickly when in residence. We aim to produce computerised lists of recommended material, with correct citations. The task is a long one: the Department of External Studies produces one or more booklets for more than 300 courses each year.

This is of course a long way from the aim of producing annotated lists for students, and is only the first step towards producing bibliographies which they would find useful. Closer cooperation with lecturing staff is essential.

Our students must have access to a well-chosen reference collection. While monographs and serials in a library collection may be discovered by consulting the library's catalogues, a comprehensive reference collection is an essential part of its resources, since it provides the key to the journal literature through specialised bibliographies, indexes and abstracting publications. Other reference material, including encyclopaedias, dictionaries, handbooks, guides to the literature and directories fill important informational needs.

As with most libraries, the reference collection material in the Dixson Library is not for loan, yet students from the earliest levels need access to this kind of material. How then can the distant student access the Social Sciences Citation Index, the full Oxford English Dictionary, or Chemical Abstracts?

The Dixson Library provides a postal reference service to external students. However, the service is limited to searching for specific pieces of information, verification of bibliographic information, searching the catalogues for appropriate monographs on stated subjects, and other relatively straightforward enquiries. Students who live close to other libraries of some size are advised of the appropriate reference tools to consult there.

Students may request searches of commercial databases such as those marketed by Dialog, but they must pay for them themselves. We perform considerable numbers of searches for postgraduate externals who prefer to spend the money involved, rather then the precious time it takes to perform manual searches in the various indexing and abstracting journals.

Students need access to a comprehensive collection of monographs and serials with considerable depth in the areas of teaching and research in the University, to provide that wealth of material to extend and enrich their experience.

It goes, almost without saying, that the resources available to the external students should be equal to those provided to internals enrolled in the same courses. Both separate collections for externals and integrated collections may be seen in Australian libraries. The Thatcher Library at the University of Queensland is an example of a separate collection, while the University of New England has moved from that arrangement to an integrated collection. The physical arrangement is, of course of lesser importance than the degree of access which external students have to the library's collections. Where one collection serves the entire University population, care must be taken to safeguard the interests of each sector. Libraries which maintain separate collections for external students are able to adopt streamlined procedures and

economical storage, and are not troubled by the conflicting demands of external and internal students. However, unless the staff of the external library is able to draw on the wider library resources, separate collections may mean considerable duplication of resources. Having experienced both separate and integrated systems at the Dixson Library, we believe that our present integrated system make the most economical use of our limited resources, but still ensures that externals have access to as large a body of literature as possible.

It is a cause for some concern that there is a considerable discrepancy between the borrowing rates for external and internal students. While we are unable to dissect our loans statistics precisely, it appears that last year our internals borrowed about 32 books each (excluding reserve collection use), while externals only borrowed three books by post. They accounted for another 1.5 items while on campus for external schools. We believe that only about one quarter of our externals make any use of our mail service.

Since our purchases of mulitple copies of monographs are based on total course enrolments, this suggests a considerable underutilisation of our collection, particularly that part of it purchased specifically for undergraduate purposes. We do not know why external borrowing rates are so low, even allowing for the essentially part-time nature of external studies. Contributing factors must be the high cost of return postage which our students have to meet themselves; the necessity (up to now) to request items by post, not by telephone; and the difficulty of finding out what material is available, or how suitable it might be.

It is surprising too that our externals only made about 1.5 requests each for photocopies last year. While this service is not free, it is certainly much cheaper than obtaining material through the interlibrary loan system, and, we believe, much quicker. It is surely much easier to request an item through the mail than it is to travel in the evening or the weekend to a library, find the article and photocopy it personally. This is born out by the large number of students who leave photocopy requests at the end of each external school, for postage to their homes.

One of the interesting and perhaps unexpected findings of the Winter-Cameron study was that students receiving course readers tended to make greater, rather than less, use of additional material.[4] An assumption sometimes made is that the provision of extensive material to students, particularly those in the early stages, eliminates the need for additional material. I am sure it is possible to design sets of material which will meet students' informational needs and still stimulate their curiosity and interest. I am sure that material can also be designed to meet the needs for libraries which I outlined at the beginning of my paper. I am also sure that not many institutions do prepare such material. And, if they do, the consequence seems to be that students will be encouraged to look further for additional material.

How well, then, is the Dixson Library providing for its external students, in terms of the four necessary elements of a library service? It will be clear that our externals do not have the same access to the Library as their internal colleagues. They have access to trained library staff by telephone, but at their own expense. They have access to that part of the catalogue which lists material added to the Library in the last ten years, if they are prepared to buy a microfiche catalogue, and have access to a microfiche reader. They have 'second-hand' access to the reference collection, if they care to ring or write to the Library. They have access to the entire library collection, but they may not know, in any detail, what it contains.

Before moving on to the alternatives available to external students, I would like to consider, briefly, the special case of the postgraduate external.

External postgraduates present a particular problem. Their informational needs can be very great, particularly if they are enrolled in MLitt degrees, and it is rare for all of these needs to be met by a single library.

The majority of New England postgraduate students are enrolled externally. In 1984 we had 927 external masters and doctorate students, compared with 342 internals. External postgraduate enrolments have risen dramatically in recent years; today's enrolment is more than three times that of 1977. Yet in the same period there has been little recognition of the implications of these rising numbers, and of the difficulties of providing for the informational needs of these students.

A model for a comprehensive library service for distant postgraduates is provided by the Armidale College of Advanced Education, which has contracted to provide library services to health workers in the New England region, many of whom are quite remote from Armidale. The College lends books and audiovisual materials, provides journal article photocopies, performs literature searches, compiles bibliographies, and provides reference advice on a range of informational matters. The clients of the service are doctors in private practice and in hospitals, and other health professionals in hospitals and community health centres.

In 1984 the service had 262 regular patrons. Material is delivered using the delivery vehicles of the Regional Linen and Pathology services, both of which make trips to centres throughout the region several times each week.

The service is based on the collection of material which supports the nurse educator and basic nursing courses run by the College. It also draws on the resources of the Dixson Library, which has substantial holdings in physiology, biology and social sciences, and on the interlibrary loan network.

The Department of Health funds the service, making a payment of $20,000 in 1984 to cover salary and running costs. Additional funds are allocated for the purchase of monographs and serials. Individual patrons are not charged for the service.[5]

The service is characterised by a high degree of service by the Library to its clients, whose informational needs and isolation from a comprehensive library service have close similarities to those of external postgraduates. It is also characterised by a creative use of resources, particularly in respect to delivery methods. A close relationship has developed between the librarians involved in the service and their clients. The same close relationship, and delivery of service, should be possible for postgraduate distant students.

What do external students do if they are not able to obtain the kind of library service they want? As we all know, they turn to any library in their home community which is prepared to offer them service.

J.E. Gough, in an examination of study centres, listed the advantages of obtaining library facilities locally as:

1. access to on-the-spot reader services and help from the librarian

2. more immediate access to wanted material (if it is in the collection)

3. avoidance of mailing costs

4. ability to browse in other subject areas as well as more broadly in their own subject area

5. development of library skills

6. more effective use of the librarian's time (as) students do their own reference work instead of writing to ask library staff to do it for them.[6]

A poll of New England external students in 1980 showed that both users of our postal service and non-users also used a range of other libraries; other university and college libraries, and libraries of government departments, schools, hospitals, the CSIRO, technical colleges and shire and municipal libraries. Students obtain borrowing rights at those libraries which offer them, and study in, and borrow from (through friends and relatives) those which do not.

Public libraries, maintained by local government authorities, bear the burden of servicing external students in suburban and rural areas remote from tertiary libraries. The Librarian of the Sutherland Shire Library service, in the southern suburbs of Sydney, recently expressed the problems of servicing external students, saying of ours,

> ... many of these students are simply bypassing the New England collection and using their local libraries... I don't think that universities and colleges can expect that sort of continuing service from public libraries these days. I think that tertiary students are getting more than their share of a very small cake.[7]

While we can argue that external students, as ratepayers are entitled to service from their municipal libraries which are maintained from those rates, it is obvious that there are very many demands on these libraries. They are scarcely well-enough funded to provide for the other recreational and informational needs of their clients, without having to provide reference services to tertiary students as well. While librarians in areas with small numbers of externals students may well enjoy the challenge that they present, the demands of large numbers may well be an intolerable burden.

Of particular concern is the use which some external students make of the interlibrary loan system, frequently to obtain material which is available from their home libraries. While they are able to thereby avoid postage costs, they are only transferring these costs to the hard-pressed public library. Public libraries may also incur additional costs in purchasing material specifically for these students, material which is available to the student already from the institution's library.

Many tertiary institutions now offer borrowing rights to external students of other institutions; these include many colleges of advanced education and some universities. In our case at least, such arrangements cannot be regarded as reciprocal, because, while we do enrol any external student living in our area, their numbers are quite small.

There is no doubt that many of our students are not able to borrow material from libraries which they regard as convenient, and frequently express surprise and anger at this, contending that all tertiary institutions are maintained at public expense, and should therefore by open to all; a simplistic view which ignores the politics and realities of tertiary education funding.

Libraries refusing service to external students of other institutions may have cause for alarm in two areas: competition with home institution students for the same material, and a general overloading of services.

I suspect that the fear of competition for resources might be somewhat overrated, as it would need a concentration of students enrolled in particular subjects to be using the same library, and the courses offered by the two institutions would need to be so similar that topics are studied simultaneously. For instance, 375 of our students live in southeast Queensland, and of them, about one hundred have applied to the University of Queensland for borrowing rights. The largest group are the BA candidates, who number thirty-nine, certainly not enough to cause competition, even if their colleagues in far north NSW also exercise their privilege of access.

The problem of a general overloading of services might be a greater one. I have already mentioned the plight of the public library; other tertiary libraries would no doubt experience servere difficulties if every nearby student of ours were to be enrolled as a borrower. The Macquarie University Library, for instance, has a potential intake of about one thousand extra

students, if every New England student living in the northern, western, northwest and northern beaches surburbs of Sydney were offered borrowing rights. While perhaps up to half of these would accept, this would add a considerable burden to an already hard-pressed library service.

The problems which other types of library must face in attempting to service external students must be great. We occasionally receive interlibrary loan requests from special libraries for undergraduate material; our usual response to such requests is to advise the librarians concerned of the services provided to our external students. However, our concern about the burden carried by such libraries must be less, since they do not have the same obligation to provide all types of service to their patrons.

Using other libraries obviously offers one solution to the problem of obtaining access to library resources. Another solution which has had considerable support is that of the study centre. The Committee of Open University concluded in 1975 that

> the provision of books is the key to the success of any system of external studies... Both Britain and Australia have found that access to other university libraries is not the simple answer, nor is the reliance on inadequate public library services.[8]

The Committee recommended that study centres be developed, where possible as joint facilities with existing institutions such as universities, schools, local authority libraries, research establishments such as the CSIRO, and the like. Funding for these centres would provide for the basic requirements including library accommodation.[9]

The Winter-Cameron study lends support to the idea of a national network of study centres. Students of institutions providing study centres regarded their centres highly, and used them to advantage.[10]

The proposal was taken up again in 1984 by the Advanced Education Council, which suggested that providers of external courses would establish study centres within their own regions, and that any external student in the area would then use these facilities.[11]

A study centre on the model proposed by the Committee on Open University is the Northern Territory External Studies Centre, which was established by the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission in 1982 to facilitate external studies at the tertiary level by residents of the Territory.[12] While the Centre might be seen as a less than satisfactory substitute for a 'proper' university, it certainly fills an important role in providing information and support for residents. The Centre draws heavily on the resources of the Darwin Institute of Technology to provide a library service to students. The Centre funds a library extension officer who is stationed at the Institute Library, and who provides services, including a

postal service to students throughout the Territory. The Centre also purchases some material for their use. At the moment, of the seventy New England students living in the Territory, about twenty are registered with the Centre.

Gough points out that,

> the better the library facility at a study centre the more critical are the students who use it... when a collection is sufficient to generate student usage, student expectations rise and criticisms of shortcomings become more trenchant.[13]

If a study centre is to provide a library service which meets student expectations and needs, it must be attached to a library of some size, or else develop a collection of some size and quality of its own. The establishment and staffing of a library with an adequate reference collections, together with a useful stock of monographs and serials, is an expensive undertaking, especially since it would need to be staffed with professional librarians at the times of most use, that is evenings and weekends. The establishment of such a network of centres could only be achieved with a considerable input of funds at the national level.

I said earlier that I wanted to return to the question of innovation in the provision of library services to distant students. At the Dixson Library we look with envy at those institutions whose small external numbers have allowed the provision of imaginative and extensive programs. For instance, the California State University in 1980 employed a consultant for a three year project to investigate and develop methods of delivering library service to off-campus students. The project began with detailed discussions with teaching staff to find out their expectations for library service to on-campus students, with the intention of providing the same quality of service to externals. Each off-campus student was issued a copy of the library serials catalogue on microfiche. Using commercial databases, bibliographies were compiled, complete with abstracts, and sent to students on microfiche, as were copies of out-of-print and non-copyright material. Computer search costs were subsidised, and sets of the *Education index* and other journal indexes were placed at various local sites. At these sites telephones with automatic dialers were provided to connect with twelve on-campus phones, including two in the library. Daily delivery services to the local sites, which were mostly public libraries, were provided, and workshops for the local librarians were conducted. The number of students served was 399, who were enrolled in twenty-five courses. The total enrolment of the University was 14,300.[14]

Consider the costs involved in providing such services to six thousand students spread all over Australia. To provide each one with a complete microfiche catalogue would cost $120,000 or $24,000 if we gave them quarterly issues of the serials section only. To provide one free Dialog search to every postgraduate student would cost us about $40,000 in computing costs, plus half a librarian to perform them. If we gave every external

ten free photocopies each year, it would cost us about $60,000. If we put in a toll-free telephone line and every external rang us five times each year, our telephone bill would rise by at least $30,000, and we would need to employ two more librarians to answer the phone. If every external student borrowed books at the same rate as internals, our outward postage costs would be $100,000 each year.

It may seem that I have wandered some distance from my problem, that of providing materials and library services beyond set texts and references. Most, if not all, Australian libraries with distant patrons provide a range of services beyond this. But it must be realised that the services we provide do not approach those enjoyed by on-campus students, and that the provision of enhanced programs to equalise these services will be extremely expensive. So expensive, in fact, that universities offering external courses need to face the fact that the library support available may not, and perhaps cannot, be entirely satisfactory. While in the current financial climate additional funding for teriary institutions is unlikely, it must be understood that without it, libraries will be unable to offer much more than a mail order service to their external students.

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Craig Grimison
Dixson Library
University of New England

THE EXTERNAL STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF FORMAL READER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Reader education or, as it is sometimes known, user instruction has become an integral part of the services offered by the tertiary library in Australia. The need to educate the user to effectively use the libray resources available to him has been identified as an important function of libraries since the mid 1960s. Indeed even as far back as 1966 the Commonwealth Advisory Committee on Advanced Education in its first report to the Australian government indicated that

> The college library had a responsibility to ensure the user is aware of how to use the available library resources. It is not sufficient for the library of an educational institution merely to provide books to meet expected demands. It should actively encourage the use of its facilities inculcating the bibliographical and information skills valuable to the student in any future career.[1]

By the mid 1970s the practice of conducting formal reader education programs was well established. In a survey of reader education in tertiary libraries in Australia in 1975, of the fifty-three institutions which responded forty-seven conducted library orientation programs, forty conducted formal reader education programs for students and seven also provided formal reader education programs for staff.[2] Although no recent survey has been conducted of reader education in Australian libraries it is true to say that since 1975 the practice has only increased and certainly reader education programs have become more sophisticated.

This is largely due to the increasing emphasis in tertiary education on independent study and learning. While this of course is particularly relevant to the area of external teaching which I will be discussing shortly, it is true to say that even the emphasis on tutorials, workshops and seminars as a teaching method for on-campus students has implications for the provision of reader education, so too has the availability of an ever increasing number of courses. Stevenson, at a conference on educating the user in London in 1979 stated that the

> increase in the number of inter-disciplinary courses, cutting across traditional subject boundaries has required the student to be familiar with a greater quantity of sources and formats than before. The student therefore requires help to make efficient use of all the material available and useful to him.[3]

We are all aware that students, particularly external students as I will show later, require help to make efficient use of the available material, in fact students in may cases are not well enough equipped even to find material. This problem has been

highlighted by the various user failure studies which have been conducted in Australia and overseas. Most of these studies have concluded that between 40-50% of users will not find the material they want.

It is interesting to note and certainly worrying that a study of user failure at the University of Sydney Library found that while more than a quarter of the searches in the catalogue and almost half of the searches in the shelves ended in failure the library held 90% of the items that students were seeking. The most disturbing implication of this is that those users who have failed will be less inclined in the future to use the library. Clearly, as Radford points out, this is proof of the need for more intensive and extensive programs of user education.[4]

Given that we recognise the relevance of reader education, and its place as in integral part of the services offered by tertiary libraries how then does this service differ for the external student?

External study, by definition, allows students who may be dispersed over vast geographical areas the opportunity to complete a course of study without the need to regularly attend classes at the institution where they are enrolled. Originally seen in Australia as a facility for school teachers isolated in country areas to improve their qualifications, external study has now become a notable feature of many Australian institutions. According to Johnson, since 1975 the numbers enrolled in the external mode have approximately doubled at universities and trebled in CAEs with approximately 10% of the total enrolment in universities and 15% in CAEs devoted to external students.[5]

The University of New England has the largest number of external students of any university in Australia. In 1984, as Margaret Maticka has already mentioned the total number of external students was 5883. The University offers over 350 separate courses of study externally. Of these courses approximately 10% are first year courses while some 23% are at postgraduate level.[6]

The nature of external study has implications for the type of student involved in it. The external student profile is quite different from that of the internal student. This has certain implications for the provision of reader education programs. Firstly, the external student is much older. Henri states that the external student has an average age of 31 years and the ages range from 18 to 70 years.[7] This compares favourably with the University of New England where the average age is 33 years and ages range from 20 to 70 years.

The age difference is due to a number of factors; some institutions do not allow or at least discourage the enrolment of students straight from school while entry requirements are normally relaxed for mature age students, many external students seeking their first qualifications or upgrading their qualifications are in mid-career and hence find external study

the only or most convenient way of improving their positions while many simply are isolated geographically from tertiary institutions or prefer the more flexible mode of study which does not require attendance at regular classes. A recent report on services to external students at Brisbane CAE listed some 46 reasons why students enrolled in the external mode, many of these relating to the students' personal or work commitments.[8]

If we also look at the occupational groups of the external students we begin to establish a clearer profile. The following table groups students by sex and occupation for the Bachelor of Arts at the University of New England, ages are also indicated. As the BA accounted for approximately 50% of the total enrolment in 1984, the table is fairly representative of the external student, particularly the undergraduate.

Table 1 - BA - Occupation and Sex [9]

MAIN OCCUPATION GROUPS	MALES*	FEMALES**
Administrators/Managers (non-degree self-employed)	13.3%	
Clerical/Office (non-degree)	12.2%	17.1%
Full-time domestic		22.3%
Professions/Arts (para-professional)	21.5%	21.3%
Retired/Independent	9.5%	8.4%
Teacher/Lecturers (mainly 3 year trained)	24.5%	21.1%
TOTAL	80.8%	90.2%

* 52% of males were aged over 35 years
** 76% of females were aged over 35 years

While we have assumed and perhaps wrongly that internal students, particularly the younger undergraduates have some knowledge of library resources and processes we have found it unwise to assume that external students, given their age and occupation groupings, will be familiar with the variety and complexity of library services available to them. Indeed studies conducted locally and elsewhere have confirmed this.

One of the principal findings of the Winter and Cameron study *External students and their libraries* was that

> appart from the loan of books by delivery, many external students were unaware of even the most basic services offered by their own libraries.[10]

In the case of the University of New England students who were surveyed for this study, approximately 30% of students were not aware that assistance to students could be given by telephone, approximately 25% were not aware that photocopies could be provided which did not have to be returned and approximately 30% were not aware that alternative references to those requested could be provided.

A study conducted at the Dixson Library some years ago also found that students were not aware of important library resources. The study involved postgraduate students of the Master of Educational Administration and the Diploma of Tertiary Education and was conducted in two parts.[11] The study though of a relatively small group of students was particularly useful from the point of view of surveying a group of supposed 'library conscious students', these students having already completed an undergraduate qualification.

A questionnaire, along with packages of material containing descriptions of services available to external postgraduate students was sent to the students prior to their attendance at their compulsory residential school. The questionnaire included questions on academic progress, use of other libraries, use of the library catalogue, awareness of particular reference titles, willingness to consult with library staff, and so on.

The students were asked to return the questionnaire, at which stage they would receive a third package which included a compendium of bibliographical tools available in the Dixson Library which were relevant to the area of education, this was the incentive to return the first questionnaire and seemed to work well. When the students attended the residential school they participated in an intensive reader education session on their first day and were then asked to complete a second evaluative questionnaire.

One of the aims of this study was to determine the value of reader education to the external student and in this case an external student who had already completed a course of study and who logically should be more familiar with the range of library services available.

The following table indicates the lack of awareness of certain resources prior to the reader education program and the changes after the program.

Table 2

QUESTIONS	FIRST QUESTIONNAIRE	SECOND QUESTIONNAIRE
Do you find the microfiche catalogue easy to use?		
- easy to use	24%	62%
- difficult to use	2%	0%
- as easy/easier than card catalogue	13%	22%
- more difficult	22%	11%

Table 2 - (cont.)

QUESTIONS	FIRST QUESTIONNAIRE	SECOND QUESTIONNAIRE
How adequate is your understanding of available information resources in relation to your course/s?		
- Satisfied - I can locate information resources	46%	58%
- uneasy that I may miss information resources	30%	29%[12]
- concerned that I may be unaware of information resources	20%	13%
Are you aware of:	YES	NO
- Current Index to Journals in Education	50%	50%
- Resources in Education	65%	35%
- Australian Education Index	61%	39%
- British Education Index	76%	24%
- Education Index	67%	33%
- Educational Administration Abstracts	67%	33%
- Social Sciences Citation	89%	11%
- Dissertation Abstracts International	85%	15%
During the residential did you use the following items for the first time?		
- Current Index to Journals in Education		42%
- Resources in Education		31%
- Australian Education Index		29%
- British Education Index		9%
- Education Index		11%
- Educational Administration Abstracts		33%
- Social Sciences Citation Index		11%
- Dissertation Abstracts International		31%

Clearly the results confirm the need for and value of reader education; however, they also serve to assist in determining the level and content of future programs.

As with internal students at the University of New England, external students are offered orientation tours while at residential schools. Unlike the tours offered for internals, they are more oriented towards particular subject areas. Emphasis is also placed on a general approach to library organisation and not as it only applies to the Dixson Library, while certain basic services such as loan services receive greater attention. The need to conduct these tours with a friendly and sympathetic manner is also stressed with staff, bearing in mind that many of these students may not have used a tertiary library before.

A survey was conducted by reader services staff in 1983 to seek feedback on these subject oriented tours.[13] Of the 100 students who were surveyed nearly all agreed that the orientation tours were worthwhile, three-quarters stated they would prefer to attend a session on day one of their school, while approximately 80% felt the tours should take 20 minutes or longer to conduct. These results proved interesting as students, while recognising the value of reader education programs, were certainly not aware of the complexity of services available, yet an increasing number also recognised that the library tour was not a whirlwind affair 'designed to acquaint the novice with all they wanted to know about libraries in ten minutes'.

Of interest also were the general comments received. Many commented on the content of the sessions. For example, one of the main criticisms was the fact that an orientation session had not been offered earlier on, that it would have been more appropriate in their first year rather than their fourth year.

One of the main reasons for this is the amount of involvement in these programs by the academic staff. The literature has for many years revealed the importance of involving academic staff in reader education programs. Elaine Haworth in an investigation of external student library use at Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology claimed that

> if the library plays only a small role in the study programs of external students, it is because academic staff do not expect much of the libraries and do not communicate or cooperate with them sufficiently to exploit their resources when learning programs are being devised and presented.[14]

Haworth interviewed 35 lecturers at Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology and asked each to respond to a set of six questions. The answers to the final question 'to what extent do lecturers require students to take part in the teaching institutions user education program?' were not encouraging. The concept of user education for external students during residential schools was seldom envisaged nor was the proposal to prepare reader education in a form which could be supplied to an external student used off campus.

During the May 1985 residential schools held at the University of New England 550 students attended reader education programs. Given that over 4000 students attended residential schools during this period, this represents a coverage of only 13%.

Of the 134 courses for which schools were conducted, 110 course coordinators were contacted by letter and many more by telephone. Of these, 28 replied positively, 5 replied negatively and 77 did not reply. This represents an overall response rate of approximately 25% with a positive response of some 20%. The following table shows the breakdown by residential school periods, there being 4 residential school periods in the May school.

SCHOOL	COURSES	READER EDUCATION PROGRAMS	PERCENT[15]
1	31	7	22.58
2	32	6	18.75
3	40	8	26.00
4	31	7	22.58
TOTAL	134	28	20.90

It is worthwhile and perhaps fair to note that some schools were involved in substantial practical laboratory work off campus while some schools were timetabled so heavily for face-to-face teaching that there simply were not the available times to schedule a reader education program. Clearly, we have a long way to go however before we achieve an acceptable coverage of students. Of course the result of greatly increased reader education for external students has serious implications for staffing levels, an area I do not propose to talk about here.

Of particular concern also is the importance of ensuring that academic staff attend the reader education programs along with their students. Unfortunately, unlike reader education programs which are organised for internal students at the University of New England, it is not as easy to ensure that academic staff attend because of their heavy teaching commitments. Of the 48 groups which were involved in reader education during the May school at the University of New England, academic staff attended only 13. Predictably for those 13 programs where staff did attend, attendance rates were near to 100%, while attendance rate for sessions where staff did not attend were down by approximately 50%.

The importance of acadmeic staff involvement in reader education programs is mainly applicable to those courses for which there is a residential component. At the University of New England where the majority of courses are involved in residential schools this is indeed relevant. However, what of those students not attending residential schools or those students not attending schools until late into their course program?

Various suggestions have been put forward over the years for development of reader education packages such as videos, kits and so on which can be sent or loaned to students. Given that external students have shown a marked preference for visiting libraries and being able to browse, as well as personal contact with library staff it seems that these suggestions may have limited success.

There is a need therefore to provide face-to-face reader education off campus. Some institutions have developed a network of study centres which have been used as venues for reader education programs. This type of arrangement normally involves librarians from the home institution visiting the study centres. While these sessions certainly go part way to educating students in the efficient use of library resources they are conducted in isolation from a library setting. Also, not all institutions have developed a network of study centres. The University of New England has no such network yet

50% of its students live over 500 kilometres from Armidale with some 90% living in New South Wales.

Given this situation, students need to be brought together in appropriate locations to enable reader education sessions to be conducted. Ideally, these sessions should be conducted in other tertiary libraries which house similar resources. This could be arranged as part of an existing reciprocal arrangement or on a contract basis.

Either alternative, however, presumes access to the library and its lending privileges. The question of access to other institutions' libraries is extremely important, but is yet to be fully addressed. External students have indicated strongly the need to be able to borrow from and use the services of other libraries. Until they are able to do this, the possibility of external students being able to improve their library skills are limited. As Crocker has put it,

> while students from another institution are treated as intruders in local institutions' libraries, their ability and willingness to develop appropriate library research skills decline.[16]

Some Australian tertiary institutions already provide reciprocal borrowing arrangements or are part of a network offering these privileges. However, arrangements to date have concentrated mainly on lending privileges. Why not extend these arrangements to include reader education?

As previously stated, many tertiary libraries have developed reader education programs f their internal students and in some cases external students. It may be possible where courses and level are appropriate fo external students to slot into these existing programs.

Alternatively, institutions could organise separate programs, the details of content, level and timetabling to be organised cooperatively: handouts produced by the home library could even be used and forwarded to the local library.

Most institutions produce listings of their external students by geographic location and course. It would be possible therefore to identify discrete groups of students by course within an area close to a given institution. As there may be questions of privacy to be considered in relation to access to student names and addresses it may be necessary for the home library to notify students of this service. This could be done either directly or through the Department of External Studies' frequent mailings. It would be possible even to use regional liaison officers in such a coordinating role.

The alternative to the reciprocal arrangement is of course a contract arrangement, i.e. the home institution pays the local institution in the form of a fee or by employing a part time librarian at the local institution to provide this service. This could be difficult to administer, though extremely attractive to those institutions which may already be bearing

the burden of servicing the needs of students who are not their own. This may be particularly relevant to certain metropolitan tertiary institutions which are geographically convenient to larger numbers of external students.

I have stated that reader education programs enable the student to more effectively use the resources of the library. I have also stated that given the profile of the external student it is even more important that they are able to participate in such programs. Unfortunately, because external students are isolated from their home institutions they are less able to take advantage of such programs. It is up to tertiary institutions to ensure that while educational opportunities for external students may not be identical they should be equal; access to reader education programs should be a service we can provide to both internal and external students alike.

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11. Survey of reader education for external students in the Master of Educational Administration and Graduate Diploma in Tertiary Education at the University of New England in 1981. The survey was conducted by David Sloper, Steve O'Connor and Iqbal Chaudhry.

12. It is interesting to note that students' uneasiness that they may miss important resources had not changed markedly. The main difference after the reader education session is that they know 'how to find out'.

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Margaret Cameron
Chief Librarian
Deakin University

THE WINTER-CAMERON REPORT TWO YEARS ON

Introduction

In 1982, the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission provided funds to Deakin University to carry out a cross-institutional study of external students attitudes to, and use of library services. The work was done by Andrew Winter, under my general guidance and encouragement, and our report *External students and their libraries* appeared in 1983. The conference organisers have asked me to discuss developments since then.

First, some background.

Postsecondary correspondence study in Australia began in the early part of this century with courses offered by the University of Queensland (1911) and the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (1919). In the years up to the late 1960s and early 1970s postsecondary correspondence studies continued as a relatively small, but growing, part of the overall provision of tertiary education in Australia. Since the early 1970s, however, numbers of institutions and students have expanded rapidly. In the triennium 1979-81 there was almost a 30% increase in external enrolments from 30,231 (1979) to 39,040 (1981). In 1982, external students represented almost 12% of all the tertiary enrolments in Australia. At the same time, the technologies and methodologies considered, and sometimes utilised, by the planners of external studies became more sophisticated. Nevertheless, most external students continued reliant upon printed study materials and upon the postal system (or more recently courier system) for the delivery of those materials.

Despite recommendations in the report *Open tertiary education in Australia* (1974) for more open entry to tertiary education and the coordinated development of distance education and the coordinated development of distance education, there remained little national perspective or planning. Similarly, little systematic work was done in Australia to evalute the effectiveness of the various teaching and delivery methodologies used. In particular, although library use is often regarded as an essential factor in university or college study, external students tend to make much lower use of their own institution's library services than do internal students. Few external student have the same opportunities for the use of their own library as their internal peers, and there is great variation in the quality and relevance of library services locally available to external students.

Attitudes and beliefs regarding library services are important factors in the student's decision to utilise them. He may also be influenced by other factors, such as the distance system

within which he studies, and the circumstances of his own life, for example the adequacy of local library resources, his perceived insolation from the 'home' library service, his purpose in studying, and his family and work responsibilities.

Previous Australian studies on the provision of library services to external students had been few, and all had been of individual institutions. Most had been made from the point of view of the library, rather than from the point of view of the student. Our study sought opinions from 2,198 external students from ten institutions, and 1,615 responded. Careful study of the respondents established that they were very representative of external university students in Australia, but somewhat less representative of external college students, as students from colleges offering only a limited range of courses were deliberately excluded in the selection criteria. Overall, however, the sample of returns was sufficently representative to convince us that our conclusions and proposals for action were soundly based.

In discussing what has happened since the publication of our report I will consider first changes in the overall environment of external study, and secondly, the areas where progress has been made. Finally, I will look at those areas where there is still considerable room for improvement.

Environmental Change

Since the report *External students and their libraries* appeared, there have been a number of changes in the external environment which have implications for library services to external students. I will mention six of these briefly.

1. On 11 July 1983, at Toowoomba, the Directors of External Studies from the Universities of Queensland, New England, Macquarie and Murdoch and the Registrar of Deakin University issued what has become known as the 'Toowoomba Accord', a statement intended to promote cooperation between universities teaching external studies, in particular, the area of transferring academic credit. The statement is as follows:

> As a means of reinforcing their shared commitment to increasing cooperation and in line with the recommendations of the Johnson Report to CTEC, they resolved to commend to their Vice-Chancellors, individually and collectively, the idea of a consortium of external studies through which they would seek:
>
> 1. To facilitate students' access to inter-university enrolment and individual external course units.
>
> 2. To explore possibilities for the establishment of a course combination drawn from a common pool.

This recommendation stresses a wish to increase availability of external course choice for students. It does not seek to reduce the autonomy of any particular university nor to commit funds in advance of any specific plan for cooperative activity.

Facilitation of cross-crediting has made some progress. A joint women's studies major is offered by Deakin and Murdoch University and the University of Queensland. Students from all three institutions take courses from the others, and while, for example, Queensland or Murdoch students are studying Deakin's course *Women and social change*, they are all Deakin students; while they are studying Murdoch's courses *Woman in society* or *Women, capitalism and the family*, they are all Murdoch students. Similarly, this year Slavonic studies courses from Macquarie have been available to Deakin students.

The Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission's Evaluations and Investigations Program funded a study of cross-crediting arrangements between distance education institutions, which was carried out by Tony Pritchard, Registrar of Deakin University, and David Jones, now of the Faculty of Education of the University of New England. The study recommended a system for course cross-crediting, so that a student could find out in advance which courses were available from other off-campus universities, and know that if he studied a particular course successfully it would be accepted in his degree program in his home university. As far as library service is concerned, this new arrangement has started to break down the barriers at the institutional level, so that it is becoming much easier for administrators and academics to share the attitude librarians and students have always had - that cooperative access by students to library and other academic resources is feasible and worthwhile.

2. There have been changes in the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission, under the leadership of its new chairman Hugh Hudson, which are tending to break down intersectoral barriers as well. No longer are universities convinced that proposals involving interaction with the college sector or the TAFE sector are fairly unlikely to succeed; in fact the reverse is now the case. The CTEC is taking positive action and leadership to get the various sectors of education working more closely together to the benefit of students.

3. On the other side of the ledger, Government participation and equity programs are imposing strains on universities and colleges by, for example, encouraging them (or even forcing them) to enrol more students, often without a concomitant increase in funding. Sometimes these students are less well qualified than the normal intake, so that they require extra counselling and support services if they are to succeed in their studies.

4. On the library front, the development of the Australian Bibliographic Network has the potential to mean that in any library with the ABN catalogue or access to ABN online, there is in effect available in microfiche and online the library catalogue of the home institution at which a student is studying. A Deakin student based in Sydney, for example, can consult the ABN microfiche catalogue and see whether Deakin owns the books he wants. This potential of ABN will not be fully realised for off-campus students until all the off-campus universities and colleges include all relevant holdings in the ABN database, and until user friendly end-user access to the database online is available in many libraries. But at least it is a start.

5. Most libraries are automating their processes, and many now have online catalogues and loan systems. This means that it is very easy for libraries responding to the requests of off-campus students, in particular in response to telephone requests, to search the catalogue for particular material, to determine whether it is available on the shelf at the time, and to place a reservation for the student so that no-one else can borrow it first, and it can be retrieved and sent to him at once. Furthermore, online loan systems enable libraries to enrol new borrowers easily, and to prevent delinquent borrowers from making loans. This should encourage libraries to offer the privilege of direct reciprocal borrowing to visiting off-campus students from other universities, as a criminal introduced to the system by mistake can easily be prevented from repeating his crime.

6. Finally, there has been a demonstrable change in attitude on the part of senior librarians and senior administrators towards welcoming students and staff from other institutions. The old territorial or fortress mentality appears to be breaking down, so that people are more welcoming to users from outside. I guess we have all realised that they come anyhow, and if we make them feel welcome, we will all get on better together.

Progress

In this audience I do not need to reiterate all the findings and recommendations of the Winter-Cameron study; let me first deal with three areas where there has been progress.

1. You remember two of the major findings:

   - Students strongly prefer telephone contact with their home library.

   - Students need information on what *is* currently available in their library, rather than what *should* be available, by more immediately responsive means than the postal systems used at present.

I have noted above that the availability of online loan systems and catalogues now means that librarians have the technical

posssibility of telling students immediately what is available, rather than what the library owns and perhaps might be found on the shelves. Librarians have still, however, been somewhat reluctant to offer telephone service to off-campus students, usually because of institutional red tape about STD or trunk calls, a fear of the telephone bill, and untested anxiety about staff costs. Several institutions are now offering 008 or collect telephone service to their off-campus students, for example Armidale CAE for their paramedical library service, and SACAE and Mitchell College for their external students. Some libraries are beginning to accept VIATEL requests.

In 1984, Deakin was given funds to test the viability and cost benefit of offering what was called a 'Library Hotline Service' for off-campus students. The student could call a toll-free line, and speak with a library staff member who conducted searches for specific items, or for material on particular subjects, at the online catalogue terminal during the telephone call. Because the staff member was in contact with the student throughout the search, the student could experience some feeling of participation in the search strategy. The findings of the trial have suggested that the actual telephone cost of the service would be a relatively minor element of the total library cost, in comparison with the staff cost for the librarians doing the work - and the same amount of staff time could well be being less productively utilised, on behalf of the same students, in response to mailed requests. Reverse charge toll-free telephone service was of critical importance for some 25% of students; the rest were not worried by the phone cost, access to telephone service was what mattered.

Students in the study considered the greatest benefit of the service to be knowing immediately what is available in the library, and therefore likely to be on its way and received by them within 2 or 3 days' time. We had expected a fair number of subject searches would be carried through the Hotline but the vast majority of the requests were for specific known titles: not surprising as only about 5% of our normal requests from off-campus students are reference inquires. When the library cannot immediately supply the particular item a student wants, we send a substitute (4.5% of cases). Hotline users claimed that the substitute material they received as a result of consultation over the telephone was better than that they received by using the mail service. An amusing sidelight on this, of which some of you will be aware, was that in the study by Brockman and Klobas at WAIT, students claimed that librarians selected better substitutes for the mail service, than they chose for themselves, browsing in the shelves!

The results of our study are still being analysed, but my present inclination is to offer toll-free service to interstate students, but for students within Victoria (which is, after all, a rather small State) to let them telephone at their own expense, but immediately offer to ring back if that is more convenient for them. The important thing is, however, that I believe we have overcome our natural reluctance, based on

prehistoric images of long walks to the card catalogue and back to the telephone, out to the shelves and back to the telephone, etc. We are now prepared to search in real time.

2. It was concluded in the Winter-Cameron study that:

> Students value local study centres when they are part of a well developed network provided by their institutions. The study centres can perform a valuable service to supplement the home library for the provision of library materials and other library services, and for academic support, but its potential has not been widely realised.

CTEC policy is now directed towards a national system of study centres, based on TAFE college libraries, which make up the most widespread and appropriate library network in the country. Having seen at first-hand the excellent work done by such college libraries as those in Darwin and in Port Hedland, I strongly endorse the plan to use their facilities to support local external students, wherever they come from. The CTEC has already funded the Darwin Community College for this purpose, but other remote colleges, like that at Port Hedland, are already doing the work without the money. 25% of Hedland CAE borrowers are external students from other institutions!

3. Finally, the most important finding of our study, I believe, was the strong expression of external students' need for access to convenient appropriate library resources. In particular, external students wanted to borrow books from tertiary libraries other than their own.

Since our study was carried out there has been great progress in this area. Firstly, AACOBS has published a list of the university and college libraries which are prepared to accept or welcome other people's external students, and their conditions of loan. I carried out a small survey of the experience of university libraries which had offered such facilities so far this year. The results are as follows:

	EXTERNAL STUDENTS ENROLLED JAN - JUNE 1985	FROM HOW MANY INSTITUTIONS	LOANS	COMMENTS
ANU				No reply
NNcU	140	24	No data	No problems
NUNE	No data	No data	No data	
NWU				No reply
VLU				No reply
VMoU	No data	No data	No data	(Includes all CAVAL
VDU	273	28	2743	& GTC)
QU	173	12	1030	Positive Response
QGU	103	5	No data	
QJCU	203	23	No data	
SU	No data	No data	No data	

Table (cont.)

	EXTERNAL STUDENTS ENROLLED JAN - JUNE 1985	FROM HOW MANY INSTITUTIONS	LOANS	COMMENTS
SFU	15	7	No data	No problems, no defaults
TU	37	19	No data	External only
or	90	22	No data	Including Hobart Tech., Tas. State Inst. Tech., Cen. Cont. Ed., Teachers
WMU	c.6	3	'Not Many'	We try to welcome so others will welcome ours
WU	20	15	No data	

The comments of the Librarian of the University of Queensland are of particular interest as he had not really expected that everything would go so smoothly. Let me quote his 1984 *Annual report*:

> 1984 was the first full year in which external undergraduate students from Commonwealth-funded universities and CAEs from outside Brisbane were granted borrowing privileges. This arrangement, which requires evidence that the person is a bona-fide student and that the enrolling institution will reimburse the Library for any material which the student does not return or pay for, was initiated in 1983 after discussions at the Library Committee. It has since been adopted by many university and CAE libraries throughout Australia.
>
> Fears that extension of borrowing privileges to such external students would inconvenience our own students have proved unfounded and the Vice-Chancellor has accepted a recommendation that the arrangement should be continued until the end of 1987 before further review.
>
> In 1984, 82 external students were granted borrowing privileges under this scheme, of whom 67 were University of New England students. The most common subject of study was education (11 students).

So far this year, 173 visiting students have enrolled as borrowers at the University of Queensland, from 12 universities and colleges (including Massey University in New Zealand), and have borrowed 1030 items. As the University Librarian says,

> Our response is a very positive one... Contrary to expectation there has been no evidence that they are competing with our students for heavily used material; presumably this is partly due to the spread of subjects.
>
> I have used the arrangement under which the enrolling institution promises indemnity for unreturned material in extending borrowing privileges to external students from overseas universities, e.g. Massey University in New Zealand. I have used the same offer to negotiate borrowing privileges at overseas universities for our own external students, e.g. in New Zealand and Singapore.

I think our experience is particularly significant because Brisbane is possibly the city likely to have most external students. There is great competition for entry to tertiary courses and I suspect many disappointed students turn to external study at other institutions.

CAVAL, a Victorian consortium of academic and research libraries, has been operating a reciprocal borrowing system since 1978, and its experience is well known. In 1984, the 26 participating institutions introduced 4916 students and 790 staff to the scheme. Total loans to students were 33,166 and to staff 1980, a grand total of 35,146 loans, or an average of just over 6 books each. A total of 4872 actual borrower registrations were made. This differs from the number of people introduced to the scheme, because some students ask their library for an introduction form but do not, in the end, register anywhere, some libraries enrol borrowers without bothering about the application form (Deakin is one), and some students register at more than one library. For borrower registrations, the average number of loans is just over 7. Given the normal figures for average loans per head of user population, we can see that these students were not a great burden. Of the 5706 people, 12 have been identified as overdue problems; again a rather better result than we could expect to achieve with our home clientele.

Deakin has just been granted $5,000 to investigate a national external students' library card. This is the project:

RECIPROCAL BORROWING FOR EXTERNAL STUDENTS

Background

External students (university, college, and TAFE) require direct access to, and borrowing privileges at, local convenient tertiary libraries whenever possible. However good the library services provided by their home institutions, they cannot substitute for direct access. In addition to the benefit of speed and convenience of access to information, and the saving of cost to both the student and his home library, there is an additional educational benefit, in that through such direct library use the student acquires skills in finding information and discriminating between sources of information.

Libraries, however, are funded to serve only their own students and staff, and some fear that their own users will suffer if outsiders are also supported. (The CTEC study on *External students and their libraries* indicated that such fears are exaggerated.)

Purpose and objectives of the projects

- Establish the present situation for university, college, and TAFE libraries and external students:

  Which libraries lend, which charge students deposits or fees, which require introductory letters or indemnification.

What statistics are available which would establish the burden and/or cost to lending libraries, and which might serve as a planning basis for a future system.

- If data presently collected is not sufficient as a planning basis, design, plan, and fund a *brief* investigation to gather such data.

  If (or when) the available data is sufficent, design a system of direct access and borrowing privileges for all external students, including financial compensation for lenders if that is deemed appropriate.

- Negotiate with institutions to implement the plan.

We will be seeking the cooperation of all university and college libraries in working out a system, so that all our students can benefit from the successful implementation of such a plan.

Room for Improvement

All that was the good news; let us consider other areas where libraries can influence changes suggested by our report.

- In the use of the student's own library. Students made comments about inadequate library hours, and it is sad to report that there is a national trend - minor, but worrying nevertheless - towards shorter library hours.

- Residential schools were the subject of many heartfelt complaints, both library hours during residential schools, and the lack of liaison between library staff and academic staff in planning residential schools, so that the timetable did not give students the opportunity to find and borrow material, to do their own information searching, to learn to use the library and its resources effectively, or even that untold luxury - a daily experience for the internal student - simply to enjoy the inspiration and challenge of browsing serendipitously in the book stacks and the serial display. Awareness on the part of those library staff who do not usually work with external students, of the special problems and needs of such students, has probably been improved by the greater publicity that services to external students have received over the last two years or so. At least the off-campus student should no longer be treated as a strange odd creature from distant space.

- Thirdly, while I have no evidence that any library who was not in 1982, is at present covering the two-way cost of library books sent to students, the data in the CTEC study has enabled Deakin to hold the line on the free send-out and return of library materials.

- The question of user education has frankly not been solved, and I believe at least part of this is squarely within the court of librarians. But how do you get the students to read the library guide? We were so distressed at the number of students who expected us to charge for library service we now print the word 'free' on the cover of our student library guide! Our study *may* have influenced more institutions to send students all their course material at the beginning of the year or the semester, as we found this system made it easier for students to plan their work. More likely, the cause was probably rising postage costs. This means, however, that fewer students are likely to receive regular newsletters from their college or university, in which libraries can include current news or remind students of the services that are available. Conveying basic survival information has not yet been successfully managed - by successful I mean that a lot of students demonstrate they have received it, and are acting on it.

We have also to find a way to introduce isolated students to the potential range of information resources and services. Universities and libraries have a responsibility to produce graduates with academic research skills, understanding the literature of their subject, and capable of independent information searching but knowing when to ask for help.

Finally - and perhaps paradoxically - students' worst problems may soon be back where we started - caused by insufficient liaison between libraries and academic teachers. Really old people will remember that that is how it was in the early 60s! We cannot go back to those dark ages.

Conclusion

External students are highly motivated and hardworking. They make great sacrifices of time and energy for the sake of their studies. It is up to us - librarians as well as teachers, educational administrators, national planners - to help them use their time as productively as possible.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Ms Jane Angus	Deakin University
Ms Patricia J Appavoo	Athabasca University, Alberta
Mr Ralph T Archbold	Commonwealth Department of Education, Canberra
Mr Colin T Baker	Armidale College of Advanced Education
Mrs Julie Barclay	Broken Hill College of TAFE
Mr Alan L Bundy	South Australian College of Advanced Education
Miss Margaret A Cameron	Deakin University
Mrs Nancy Clarke	Signadou College of Education
Mr Patrick Condon	University of Adelaide
Dr Brian Cook	Brisbane College of Advanced Education
Mrs Christine Crocker	Deakin University
Miss Margaret Dawbarn	Technical Extension Service, WA
Ms Susan M Dennler	Victorian College of Agriculture & Horticulture - Dookie
Mr Graham Dudley	LAA Education for Librarianship Section
Miss Jill Duff	Mitchell College of Advanced Education
Mrs Jill Duff	South Australian College of Advanced Education
Ms Margaret Emery	Roseworthy Agricultural College
Ms Anne Forster	South Australian College of Advanced Education
Mr Mike Friganiotis	Darwin Institute of Technology
Mr John L Gray	South Australian College of Advanced Education
Mr Craig Grimison	University of New England
Miss Kathleen Grosser	South Australian College of Advanced Education
Dr Keith Harry	International Centre for Distance Learning, U K

Mrs Lois Jennings	Macarthur Institute of Higher Education
Professor Richard Johnson	Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission
Ms Dianne Johnston	Deakin University
Ms Sonya Kennedy	Victorian College of Agriculture & Horticulture - Glenormiston
Mr Bruce King	South Australian College of Advanced Education
Ms Marie Kozulic	Roseworthy Agricultural College
Mr Stephen Krassay	South Australian College of Advanced Education
Mr Greg Lane	Technical Correspondence School, Queensland
Mr Richard Leadbetter	Bendigo College of Advanced Education
Ms Frances Lemmes	Sydney Technical College
Mrs Rosemary Luke	South Australian College of Advanced Education
Miss Coralie Mallitt	Australian Maritime College
Mrs Janet Martin	Gippsland Institute of Higher Education
Mrs Margaret Maticka	University of New England
Dr Denys Meakin	Open Learning Institute, British Columbia
Mr Ian Mitchell	South Australian College of Advanced Education
Mr Leonard Moore	Gippsland Institute of Higher Education
Ms Valita Muldins	Riverina-Murray Institute of Higher Education
Mr James O'Brien	Kuring-gai College of Advanced Education
Mr Brian Oxlee	Sydney College of Advanced Education
Miss Jennifer Panozzo	Victorian College of Agriculture - Longerenong
Mrs Beverly Parker	South Australian College of Advanced Education

Rev Wilfred John Pinson	Warrnambool Institute of Advanced Education
Ms Isabel Prucha	West Valley Community College, California
Ms Alison Ransome	Northern Rivers College of Advanced Education
Mr Peter Reeves	Council of South Australian College Student Organisations
Miss Robyn Schwartz	Orange Agricultural College
Mrs Judith Shand	Meadowbank College of TAFE
Mrs Aileen Stevenson	Hawkesbury Agricultural College
Ms Morwenna Vincent	Canberra College of Advanced Education
Mr Dennis Warren	Riverina-Murray Institute of Higher Education
Ms Kathleen Wenger	South Australian College of Advanced Education